GREENES

Neuer too Late.

BOTH PARTES.

Sent to all youthfull GENTLEMEN, descyphering in a true English Historie, those particular vanities, that with their Frostie vapours, nip the blossomes of euery braine, from attaining to his intended perfection.

As pleasant as profitable, being a right Pumice stone, *apt to race out idlenesse with delight, and* folly with admonition.

By ROBERT GREENE, In artibus Magister.

Omne tulit punctum.

LONDON,
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To the right Worshipfull, Tho. Barnaby, Esquire: Robert Greene wisheth increase of all honourable vertues.

SVch (right Worshipfull) as couetted to decke the Temple of *Delphos*, adorned the shrine either with greene Bayes, or curious instruments, because *Apollo* did as well patronize Musick, as Poetrie. When the *Troians* sought to pacifie the wrath of *Pallas*, the peoples presents were Bookes and Launces, to signifie her Deitie as well defended by Letters, as Armes. And they which desired to be in the fauour of *Alexander*, brought him either wise Philosophers, or hardie Souldiers: for he sought Counsellers like *Aristotle*, and Captaines like *Perdiccas*. Seeing then how gifts are the more gratefully accepted, by how much the more they fit the humor of the partie; to gratifie your Worship with something that might signifie, how in all bounden dutie I haue for sundrie fauours been affected to your Worship: and finding my abilitie so vnfit to present you with any thing of worth, at last I resolued so farre to presume, as to trouble your Worship with the patronage of this Pamphlet, knowing you are such a *Mecenas* of learning, that you will as soone vouch with *Augustus* a few verses, giuen by a poore Greeke, as of the Arabian Courtier, presented by *Titanius*. The Booke is little, yet drawne from a large principle: *Nunquam aperta est ad bonos mores via*. Wherein I haue discouered so artificially the fraudulent effects of *Venus* trumperies, and so plainely, as in a plat-forme, laid open the prejudiciall pleasures of loue, that Gentlemen may see, that as the Diamond is beauteous to the sight, and yet deadly poyson to the stomack, that as the *Lacanleafe* [illegible] by the Antidote, and the Acornes [illegible] the Vnthrifte, onely grounded vpon vertue, [illegible] then content to the fancie. If then (right Worshipfull) some of these confused Chaos, Gentlemen shall gather any principles, whereby to direct their actions, and that from rash resolute maintainers of *Venus* heresies, they become reformed Champions to defend *Pallas* Philosophies, then all the profit and pleasure that shall redound to them by this Pamphlet, shall be attributed to your Worship, as to the man, by whose meanes this *Nunquam sera* came to light. Hoping therefore, your Worship will with a fauourable insight, enter more into the mind of the giuer, then the worth of the gift, I commit your Worship vnto the Almightie.

Your Worships humbly to command,

Robert Greene.

To

To the Gentlemen Readers.

SVch (Gentlemen) as had their eares fild with the harmony of *Orpheus* Harpe, could not abide the harsh musicke of *Hiparchions* pipe, yet the *Thessalians* would allow the poore Fidler licence to frolicke it among Shepheards. Though no pictures would go for currant with *Alexander*, but such as past through *Apelles* pensil, yet poore men had their houses shadowed with *Phidias* course colours. *Ennius* was called a Poet as well as *Virgil*, and *Vulcan* with his polt foot friskt with *Venus* as well as *Mars*.

Gentlemen, if I presume to present you, as hitherto I haue done, with friuolous toies: yet for that I stretch my strings as I can, if you praise me not with *Orpheus*, hisse me not out with *Hiparchion*: If I paint not with *Apelles*, yet scrape not out my shadowes with disgrace: if I strike my stumps with *Vulcan*, though it be lamely done, yet it is a dance: so, if my *Nunquam sera* please not, yet I pray you passe it ouer with patience, and say, tis a booke. So hoping I shal find you as euer I haue done, I end,

Rob. Greene.

A Madrigall to wanton Louers.

You that by *Alcidalions* ſiluer brookes,
Sit and ſigh out the paſſions of your loues,
That on your Goddeſſe beauties feed your lookes,
And pamper vp ſweet *Venus* wanton doues,
That ſeeke to ſit by *Cupids* ſcorching fire,
And dally in the fountaine of deſire:

You that account no heauen like *Venus* ſphere,
That thinke each dimple in your Miſtreſſe chin
Earths Paradice, that deeme her golden haire,
Treſſes of bliſſe wherein to wander in:
That ſigh and court ſuppliant, all to proue
Cupid is God, and ther's no heauen but loue:

Come ſee the worke that *Greene* hath ſlily wrought,
Take but his *Nunquam ſera* in your view,
As in a mirrour there is deepely taught,
The wanton vices of proud fancies crue:
There is depainted by moſt curious art,
How loue and folly iump in euery part.

There may you ſee repentance all in blacke,
Scourging the froward paſſions of fond youth,
How fading pleaſures end in diſmall wracke,
How Louers ioyes are tempred all with ruth.
Sith then his *Nunquam ſera* yeelds ſuch gaines,
Reade it, and thanke the Author for his paines.

Ralph Sidney.

Sæpe etiam hortulanus vir valde opportuna locutus est.

IF *Horace* Satyrs merit mickle praise,
For taunting such as liu'd in *Paphos* Ile,
If wise *Propertius* was in elder daies,
Laureat for figuring out fond *Venus* wile:
If *Rome* applauded *Ouids* pleasing verse,
That did the salues that medicine loue reherse:

Then English Gentles stoope and gather bayes,
Make Coronets of *Floraes* proudest flowers,
As gifts for *Greene*; for he must haue the praise,
And taste the dewes that high *Parnassus* showers,
As hauing leapt beyond old *Horace* straine,
In taunting Louers for their fruitlesse paine,

His *Nunquam sera* more conceits combines,
Then *Ouid* in his arte did paint,
And sharper Satyres are within his lines,
Then *Martial* sung proud *Venus* to attaint:
Reade then his arte, and all his actions proue,
There is no folly like to foolish loue.

Rich. Hake Gent.

Greenes *Nunquam ſera eſt.*

BEing reſident in Bergamo, not farre diſtant from Venice, ſitting vnder a cole ſhade that thē ſhrowded me from the extreme violēce of the meridionall heat, hauing neuer a booke in my hand to beguile time, nor no patheticall impreſſion in my head to procure any ſecret meditation, I had flat falne into a ſlumber, if I had not eſpied a trauailer, weary and deſolate to haue bended his ſteppes towards me. Deſirous to ſhake off drowſineſſe with ſome company, I attended his arriuall: but as he drew neere, hee ſeemed ſo quaint in his attire, and ſo conceited in his countenance, as I deemed the man either ſome penitent pilgrime that was very religious, or ſome deſpairing liuer that had been too too affectionate. For take his deſcription.

An Ode.

Downe the valley gan he tracke,
Bagge and bottle at his backe,
In a ſurcoate all of gray,
Such were Palmers on the way;
When with ſcrip and ſtaffe they ſee
Ieſus graue on *Caluarie*;
A hat of ſtraw like a ſwaine,
Shelter for the ſun and raine,
With a Scallop ſhell before:
Sandals on his feete he wore:
Legs were bare, armes vnclad:
Such attire the Palmer had.
His face faire, like *Titans* ſhine,
Gray and buxome were his eyne,
Whereout dropt pearles of ſorrow,

Such

Such ſweet teares loue doth borrow,
When in outward dewes ſhe plaines
Harts diſtreſſe that Louers paines:
Rubie lips, cherrie cheekes,
Such rare mixture *Venus* ſeekes,
When to keepe her Damſels quiet,
Beautie ſets them downe their Diet.
Adon was not thought more faire;
Curled locks of amber haire:
Locks where loue did ſit and twine
Nets, to ſnare the gazers eine:
Such a Palmer ne're was ſeene,
Leſſe Loue him-ſelfe had Palmer beene.
Yet for all he was ſo quaint,
Sorrow did his viſage taint.
Midſt the riches of his face,
Griefe deſciphred high diſgrace:
Euery ſtep ſtrain'd a teare,
Sudden ſighes ſhew'd his feare:
And yet his feare by his ſight,
Ended in a ſtrange delight:
That his paſſions did approue,
Weedes and ſorrow were for loue.

Thus attired in his trauelling roabes, and leueld out in the lineaments of his phiſnomy, (not ſeeing me that lay cloſe in the thicket) he ſat him downe vnder a Beech tree, where after hee had taken vp his ſeate, with a ſigh, he began thus to paint out his paſſions.

Vnfortunate Palmer, whoſe weedes diſcouer thy woes, whoſe lookes thy ſorrowes, whoſe ſighes thy repentance: thou wandreſt to bewaile thy ſin, that heretofore haſt not wondred at the greatnes of ſin, & ſeekeſt now by the ſight of a ſtrange land, to ſatiſfie theſe follies committed in thy native home. Why, is there more grace in the Eaſt, then in the Weſt? Is God more gracious in Iewrie, then mercifull in England? more fauourable to Palmers for their trauel, then pittifull to ſinners for their penance? No, be not ſo ſuperſtitious, leſt thou meaſuring his fauor

by

by circumstance, hee punish thy faults in severity. Ah but the deepest vlcers haue the deepest corasiues: some sores cannot be cured but by *sublimatum*, and some offences, as they beginne in content, so they end in sacke-cloth. I weare not this Palmers gray, to challenge grace, nor seeke the holy Land, to counteruaile the Law, nor am a Pilgrime, to acquittance sinne with penance: but I content me in this habite, to shew the meeknes of my heart, and trauel through many Countries, to make other men learne to beware by my harmes. For if I come among youth, I will shew them, that the finest buds are soonest nipt with frosts; the sweetest flowers, sorest eaten with Cankers, and the ripest and yongest wits, soonest ouerthrowne with follies. If I chance among Courtiers, I will tell them, that as the starre Artophylax is brightest, yet setteth soonest: so their glories being most gorgeous, are dasht with sodaine ouerthrowes. If amongst Schollers, I will proue, that their Philosophicall axioms, their quiddities of Logick, their aphorismes of Art, are dissolued with this definite period, *Omnia sub sole vanitas*. If among Louers (and with this the teares fell from his eyes, and the sighes flew from his heart, as if all should split againe:) If quoth he, (and he doubled his words with an Emphasis) I fall amongst Louers, I will discipher to them, that their god is a boy, as fond as he is blind: their Goddesse a woman, inconstant, false, flattering, like the windes that rise in the shoares of Lepanthus, which in the morning send foorth gusts from the North, and in the euening, calmes from the West: that their fancies are like Aprill showres, begun in a Sun-shine, and ended in a storme: their passions deepe hell, their pleasures Chimeraes portraitures, sodaine ioyes, that appearing like Iuno, are nothing when Ixion toucheth them, but dusky and fading cloudes.

Heere he stopped, and tooke his scrip from his backe, and his bottle from his side, and with such cates as he had, as Lemons, Apricocks, and Oliues, he began a Palmers banquet: which digesting with a cup of wine well tempered with water, after euery draught, he sighed out this, *Nunquam sera est ad bonos mores via*. When he had taken his repast: casting vp his eyes to heauen, as being thankefull for his benefits, and sorrowfull for his sinnes, falling into a deepe meditation, after he had a while lien

as a man in a traunce, he ſtarted vp ſuddenly, and with a halfe chered countenance ſung out this Ode.

The Palmers Ode.

OLde *Menalcas* on a day,
As in field this ſhepheard lay,
Tuning of his oaten pipe,
Which he hit with many a ſtripe:
Said to *Coridon*, that hee
Once was yong and full of glee:
Blithe and wanton was I then,
Such deſires follow men.
As I lay and kept my ſheepe,
Came the god that hated ſleepe,
Clad in armour all of fire,
Hand in hand with Queene *Deſire*:
And with a dart that wounded me,
Pierſt my heart as I did lie:
That when I woke, I gan ſweare,
Phillis beauty palme did beare.
Vp I ſtart, forth went I,
With her face to feed mine eye:
There I ſaw *Deſire* ſit,
That my heart with *Loue* did hit,
Laying foorth bright *Beauties* hookes,
To intrape my gazing lookes.
Loue I did, and gan to woo,
Pray, and ſigh: all would not doe:
Women when they take the toy,
Couet to be counted coy.
Coy was ſhee that I gan court,
She thought *Loue* was but a ſport.
Profound Hell was in my thought;
Such a paine *Deſire* had wrought,
That I ſued with ſighes and teares,
Still ingrate ſhee ſtopt her eares,
Till my youth I had ſpent.

Laſt

Last a passion of *Repent*,
Told me flat, that *Desire*
Was a brand of *Loues* fire,
Which consumeth men in thrall,
Vertue, youth, wit, and all.
At this saw, backe I start,
Beat *Desire* from my hart,
Shooke off *Loue*, and made on oath,
To be enemy to both.
Old I was when I thus fled
Such fond toyes as cloyd my head.
But this I learn'd at *Vertues* gate,
The way to good is neuer late.
Nunquam sera est ad bonos mores via.

As soone as he had ended his Ode, he fell to his olde principle, *Nunquam sera est*: and confirming it with a sigh, he rose vp, and was ready to depart towards *Bergamo* to take vp his Lodging: for the sunne was declining towards the West.

But I desirous to reach further into this passionate Palmer, crost him the way with this salutation: Palmer (for so thy apparell discouers) and penitent, if the inward hart agrée with thy outward passions: if my questions may not agrauate thy griefe, nor my demaund be tedious to thy trauels, let me craue of curtesie whither thou doest bend the end of thy pilgrimage, that if thou beest stept awry, I may direct thee, or if thou knowest the Country, I may wish *bon fortune* to thy iourney; for I haue all my life time coueted to be faithfull to my friends, and courteous to strangers. The Palmer (amazed at my sodaine salutation) stept backe and bent his browes, as if he feared some preiudice, or were offended at my presence: but when he saw me weaponlesse, and without company, and yet so affable in words, and *debonaire* in exterior curtesies as might impost a Gentleman, he deuoutly mooued his bonnet of gray, and made this reply:

Gentleman (for no lesse you seeme) if the flower may bee knowne by smell, or the man by his words: I am a Palmer, discouered by my gray; and penitent, if you note my griefe, which sorrow is as effectuall, as my attire is little counterfeit. The di-

rection of my iourney is not to Ieruſalem: for my faith tels me, Chriſt can dew as great fauour downe in England, as in Iericho: and prayers are not heard for the place, but in the behalfe of the perſon heartily repentant. My native home is England, the end of my iourney is Venice, where I meane to viſite an old friend of mine, an Engliſhman, to whom I haue bẽ long time indebted, and now meane partly to repay with ſuch ſtore as I haue bought with hard experience. This night I will reſt in the next village: and thus I hope ſir, you reſt ſatiſfied.

This anſwere of the Palmer made me the more deſirous to enquire into his ſtate, that I entreated him I might bee hoſt to ſuch a gueſt; and ſeeing I was reſident in Bergamo, where that night he meant to harbour, ſuch lodging as a Country gentleman could affoord, and ſuch chẽre as ſuch a village might on the ſodaine yeeld, ſhould be at his command.

Well could this Palmer ſkill of curteſie, and returning me many thankes, bouctij of my proffer, and was willing to take my houſe for his Inne. As we paſt on the way, wee chanced to fall into prattle thus. Sir (quoth I) if I might with many queſtions not bee offenſiue, I would faine be inquiſitiue to know, as you haue paſſed along France, Germany, and Rhine and part of Italy, what you haue noted worthy of memory. Vncouering his cap as a man that was paſſing courteous, he anſwered thus: I tell you ſir (quoth he) as a fooliſh queſtion merits ſilence, ſo a familiar demaund craues a friendly reply of dutie, although Zeno the Philoſopher counted it more honour, to be a ſilent naturaliſt, then an eloquent Orator. But as I am not a Gymnoſophiſt, to iangle at euery Sophiſticall obiection: So I am not a ſeuere Stoike, to anſwere but by ſillables: and therefore thus to your queſtion.

After I had cut from Douer to Calice, I remembred what old Homer writ of Vliſſes, that hee coueted, not onely to ſee ſtrange Countries, but with a deepe in-ſight to haue a view into the manners of men: ſo I thought, as I paſſed through Paris, not only to pleaſe mine eie with the curious Architecture of the building, but with the diuers diſpoſition of the Inhabitants. I found therefore the Court (for I aime firſt at the faireſt) to haue a King, fit for ſo royall a Regiment, if he had beene as perfect in

true

true religion, as politique in martiall discipline; the Courtiers, they, as Aristippus, fawned vpon Dionysius, turning like to the Camelion, into the likenesse of euery obiect that the King proffered to their humorous conceits: for if the King smiled, euery one in the Court was in his iollitie: if he frowned, their plumes fell like the Peacockes feathers, so that their outward presence depended on his inward passions. Generally so, but particularly thus: the French gentlemen are amorous, as some perswaded by the beauty of their mistris, to make a brawle, as for the maintenance of Religion, to enter armes: their eyes are like Salamander stones, that fire at the sight of euery flame: their hearts as queasie as the minerals of Ætna, that burne at the heate of the Sun, and are quencht with the puffe of euery winde. They count it courtlike, to spend their youth in courting of Ladies, and their age in repenting of sinnes, yet more forward in the one, then deuout in the other. They bandy glances vpon euery face, as though they would approue euery passion for a principle, they set downe the period with a deepe sigh: yet, as the breath of a man vpon steele, no sooner lighteth on, but it leapeth off, so is the beginning and ending of their loues.

Thus much for their Amours. Now for their Armes, they be hardy souldiers, and resolute; for their faith, friendship, religion, or other particular qualities, (for there is a league betwixt vs and them,) I will spare to speake, lest in being satyricall, I should plod too farre with Diogenes, or in flattering their faults, or their follies, I should claw a fooles shoulder with Dauus in Terence: skipping therefore from them to the Germanes. Nay, stay sir (quoth I) before you passe the Alpes, giue mee leaue to hold you an houre still in Lions: for though you be a Palmer, and religious, yet I hope such deepe deuotion rested not in you, but an ounce of Venus fauours hang in your eyes, and when you had spent the morning in orisons, you could in the afternoone lend a glance to a faire Lady. The Eagle soares not so high in the ayre, but shee can espie a little fish in the sea: the sunne in Cancer goes retrograde, the coldest clime hath his summer, and Apollo was neuer so Stoicall, but *semel in anno* hee could let fall a smile; and the most seuere Pilgrime or Palmer hath an eye as well as a heart, and a looke to lend to beauty, as a thought to

bend to Theologie: therefore, I pray you, what thinke you of the French-women? At this question, although his grauitie was great yet with a pleasant countenance he made this reply: Although fire is hote, as well in the coldest Region of the North, as in the furthest Southerne paralell: the grasse of the same colour in Ægypt, as it is in Iewry, and women whersoeuer they be bred, be *mala necessaria*, yet though their generall essence bee all one, as comming from Eua, and therefore froward, inconstant, light, amorous, deceitfull, and *quid non*? better described by Maruan, then I can make description of: yet as the Diamonds in India be more hard then the Cornish stones in England: as the Margarites of the West are more orient then the Pearles of the South: so womens affections are affected after the disposition of the clime wherein they are borne: although Auicen in his Aphorismes sets downe this conclusion, that thornes no where grow without prickes, nor nettles without stings: but leauing off this preamble: thus to your question. The Women in France generally, as concerning the exterior lineaments of their outward perfection, are beautifull, as being Westernly seated neere great Britanie, where Nature sits and hatcheth beauteous Paramours: yet although *Natura naturans* hath shewed her cunning in their portraitures, as women that thinke nothing perfect that Arte hath not polished, that haue drugges of Alexandria, minerals of Ægypt, waters from Tharsus, paintings from Spaine, and what to doe forsooth? To make them more beautifull then vertuous, and more pleasing in the eyes of men, then delightfull in the sight of God: this is but their exteriour vanity that blemisheth their inward vertues, if they haue any. But more to their inferiour inclination. Some, as if they were Votaries vnto Venus, and at their natiuities had no other influence, take no pleasure but in amorous Passions, no delight but in Madrigals of Loue, wetting Cupids wings with Rosewater, and tricking vp his quiuer with sweete perfumes, they set out their faces as Fowlers do their daring glasses, that the Larkes that soare highest, may stoope soonest; assoone as the poore louing soles are wrapt within their nets, then they sue with sighs, and pleade with Sonnets, faine teares, and paint out passions to winne her, that seeming to be coy, comes at the first lure:

lure: for when they see yong novices intrapt, then the French dames are like to the people Hyperborei, that spurning liquorice with their feete, secretly slacke their hunger with the iuyce thereof: so they outwardly seeming to contemne their sutours motions, stand in deadly feare lest they should leaue off their amorous passions: so that they haue loue in their eye-liddes, so slenderly tacked on by fancy, as it drops off with euery dreame, and is shakt off with euery vaine slumber. Some of them are as Sappo was, suttle to allure, and slipperie to deceiue, hauing their hearts made of ware, ready to receiue euery impression, not content till they haue as many louers, as their hearts haue entrances for loue, and those are like to Pumice stones that are light and full of holes. Some are as inconstant as Cressida, that, be Troylus neuer so true, yet out of sight, out of minde: and as soone as Diomede beginnes to court, shee like Venetian traffique, is for his penny, current *à currendo*, sterling coyne, passable from man to man in way of exchange. Others are as Lidia, cruell, whose harts are hammered in the forge of pride, thinking themselues too good for all, and none worthy of them, and yet ofttimes nestling all day in the Sunne with the Beetle, are at night contented with a cowherd for shelter. These haue eyes of Basiliskes, that are preiudiciall to euery obiect, and harts of Adamant, not any way to be pierced: and yet, I thinke, not dying maides, nor leading Apes to Hell: for Vestaes sacrifice ceased long since in Rome, & virgins are as rare as blacke Swans: opportunitie is a sore plea in Venus court, able, I tell you, to ouerthrow the coyest that is. I could inferre more particular instances, and distinguish more at large of the French Gentlewomen: but let me leaue them to their humorous vanities, and resolue our selues, that Ireland doth not onely bring foorth Wolues, nor Ægypt Crocodiles, nor Barbarie Leopardes, nor France such qualified women; but as the earth yelds weeds as well in the lowest valleyes, as in the highest mountaines, so women are vniuersally *mala necessaria*, whereseuer they be either bred or brought vp. With this conclusiue period hee breathed him: and I could not but smile, to see the Palmer shake his head at the fondnesse of women, as a man that had beene galled with their ingratitude. Well, after he had pausd a litte, he left

France,

France, and beganne to talke of Germanie, and that was thus: After I had left Lions, I passed by the Alpes, and coasted into Germany, whereas I found the Countrey seated vnder a colde clime; so I perceyued the people high-minded, & fuller of wordes then of courtesie, giuen more to drinke, then to deuotion, & yet sundry places stuffed with Schismes and Heresies, as people that delight to be factious. There might you see their interior vanities more then their outward apparell did import, and oft times their vants more then their manhood. For loue, as I saw Venus of no great account, yet shee had there a Temple, and though they did not beautify it with Iewels, they plainely powred forth such Orisons, as did bewray, though they could not court it as the French did with Art, yet their lust was not lesse, nor their liues more honest. Because the people were little affable, I grew not so farre inquisitiue of their manners and customes, but *sicco pede* past them ouer, so that I trauelled vp as farre as Vienna, where I saw a thing worthy of memory. In a valley betweene two high mountaines, topt with trees of maruailous verdure, whereby ran a fountaine pleasant, aswell for the murmure of the streames, as for the sweetnesse of waters, there was situated a little Lodge artificially built, and at the dore a man of very great grauity, and no lesse age, sate leaning vpon his staffe, so to take the benefite of the ayre and the Sunne: his haires were as white as the threeds of silke in Arabia, or as the Palme trees on the mount of Lebanus: many yeares had made furrowes in his face, where Experience sate and seemed to tel forth Oracles. Deuotion appeared in his habite, and his outward cloth discoursing his inward heart, that the old Hermite seemed in the world a resolute despiser of the world. Standing a while, and wondring at this old man, at last all reuerence done that his yéeres did require, or my youth was bound vnto, after salutations, I questioned him of the order of his life: who answered me with such curtesie and humility, as I perceiued in his words the perfect Idea of a mortified man. After sundry questions broken with *pro & contra*, at last he tooke me by the hand, & carried mee into his Cell, where I found not those Vtensilia which Tully saies are necessarie to be in euery Cottage, but I found bookes, and that of Theologie: a drinking cup, & that was

full

full of water: a dead mans ſkull, an houre glaſſe, and a Bible: thus onely was his houſe garniſhed. After he had ſat downe a little, he loked me very earneſtly in the face, as a man that had ſome ſkill in phyſiognomy, to cenſure of the inward qualities by the outward appearance: at laſt, in rough high Dutch verſes he thus breathed out his opinion, which I drew thus into blancke verſe.

The Hermites Exordium.

Here looke (my ſonne) for no vaine glorious ſhewes
Of royall apparition for the eye,
Humble and meeke befitteth men of yeeres:
Behold my Cell built in a ſilent ſhade,
Holding Content for pouertie and peace,
And in my Lodge, is fealtie, and faith,
Labour and Loue vnited in one league.
I want not, for my minde affoordeth wealth:
I know not Enuie, for I clime not hie:
Thus doe I liue, and thus I meane to die.

Then he ſtept to his ſhelfe, and takes downe a Deaths head, whereon loking as a man that meditated vpon ſome deepe matter, he ſhooke his head, and the teares ſtanding in his eyes, hee proſecuted his matter thus.

If that the world preſents illuſions,
Or Satan ſeekes to puffe me vp with pompe,
As man is fraile and apt to follow pride:
Then ſee, my ſonne, where I haue in my Cell,
A dead mans ſkull, which cals this ſtraight to minde,
That as this is, ſo muſt my ending be.
When then I ſee, that earth to earth muſt paſſe,
I ſigh, and ſay, All fleſh is like to graſſe.

After he had thus explained the reaſon why hee kept the dead mans ſkull in his Cell, hee reatch to his houre glaſſe, and vpon that he began thus to deſcant.

If care to liue, or ſweete delight in life,
As man deſires to ſee out many daies,

Drawes me to liſten to the flattering world,
Then ſee my glaſſe which ſwiftlyout doth runne,
Comparde to man, who dies ere he begins.
This tels me time ſlackes not his poaſting courſe,
But as a glaſſe runnes out with euery houre,
Some in their youth, ſome in their weakeſt age,
All ſure to die, but no man knowes his time.
But this I thinke, how vaine a thing is man,
Whoſe longeſt life is likened to a ſpan?

Laſtly, he tooke his Bible in his hand, wherupon leaning his arme, he amplified thus.

When Satan to ſift me with his wiles,
Or proudly dares to giue a fierce aſſault,
To make a ſhipwracke of my faith with feares,
Then armde at all points to withſtand the foe
With holy armour: here's the martiall ſword:
This book, this Bible, this two-edged blade,
Whoſe ſweete content pierceth the gates of hell:
Deſciphering lawes and diſcipline of warre,
To ouerthrow the ſtrength of Satans iarre.

Thus the Hermite diſcouered to me the ſecrets of his Cell: and after, that I ſhould be priuie to all his patheticall conceits, he brought foorth a few rootes, and ſuch ſimple diet as he had, to confirme that he tyed Nature euery way within her limites. Wondring at the methode he vſed in his Cell, after I had taken my repaſt with him, as we met courteouſly, wee parted friendly, he with exhortations to beware of youthes follies, I with thankes and reuerence to his aged yeares, for his graue and fatherly perſwaſion: ſo I went from his Cell to Vienna, and from thence coaſted vp into the borders of Italie.

The Palmer had ſcarce named Italie, but we were come to my houſe, where I gaue him ſuch entertainment, as either the abilitie of my ſubſtance, the plentie of the countrie, or the ſhortneſſe of the time could afford: and becauſe I would euery way grace him, I brought downe my wife to giue him a royall welcome, a fauour ſeldome ſhewed in Italie: yet becauſe he was a

Palmer,

Palmer, and his profession valued beauty at a light price, I did him that grace. To be short, at last we sat downe to supper, and there past the time with such pleasing chat, as the pleasant Palmer pleased to conferre vpon. Supper done, I desired the Palmer to discourse (if it were not offensiue) what reason moued him to direct his Pilgrimage only to Venice. Raising himselfe vp with a smiling countenance, he made this reply.

Courteous Gentleman, for so much your affable and liberall disposition doth approue, Iupiter when hee was entertained by poore Baucis, accounted ingratitude so heinous, as hee turned their Cottage to a Temple, and made them sacrificers at his Altars: Hospitality is so precious, as no price may value. Then if I should not grant any lawful demand, I might seeme as little pliant to humanitie, as you lyable to courtesie: and therefore if the Gentlewoman your wife and you will sit vp to heare the discourses of a traueller, I will first rehearse you an English History, acted and euented in my country of England: but for that the Gentleman is yet liuing, I will shadow his name, although I manifest his follies, and when I haue made relation, I will shew why I directed the course of my Pilgrimage, onely to Venice. My wife by her countenance seemed to be maruelous content, and my selfe kept silence. Whereupon the Palmer began as followeth.

The Palmers Tale.

IN those daies when Palmerin raigned King of great Britaine, famoused for his deedes of Chiualrie, there dwelled in the Citie of Caerbrancke a Gentleman of an ancient house called Francesco, a man, whose Parentage, though it were Worshipfull, yet it was not indued with much wealth: insomuch, that his learning was better then his reuenewes, and his wit more beneficiall then his substance. This Segnior Francesco, desirous to bend the course of his compasse to some peaceable Porte, spred no more cloth in the wind then might make easie saile, lest hoysting vp too suddenly aboue the maineyard, some sudden gust might make him founder in the deepe. Though

he were yong, yet he was not rash with Icarus, to soare into the skie, but to cry out with old Dedalus, *Medium tenere tutissimum*: treading his shooe without any slippe. He was so generally loued of the Cittizens, that the richest Marchant, or grauest Burghmaster would not refuse to grant him his daughter in marriage, hoping more of his insuing fortunes, then of his present substance. At last, casting his eie on a Gentlemans daughter that dwelt not far from Caerbranck, he fell in loue and prosecuted his suite with such affable courtesie, as the maide considering the vertue and wit of the man, was content to set vp her rest with him, so that her fathers consent might bee at the knitting vp of the match. Francesco thinking himselfe cocksure, as a man that hoped his credite in the Cittie might carry away more then a countrey Gentlemans daughter, finding her father on a day at fit opportunity, he made the motion about the grant of his daughters mariage. The old churle that listned with both eares to such a question, did not in this *in vtramuis aurem dormire*, but leaning on his elbow, made present answere, that her dowrie required a greater feofment then his lands were able to afford. And vpon that, without further debating of the matter, he rose vp and hied him home: whither as soone as he came, hee called his daughter before him, whose name was Isabel, to whom he vttered these words. Why, huswife (quoth he) are you so idle tasked, that you stand vpon thornes vntill you haue a husband? are you no sooner hatched with the Lapwing, but you will run away with the shell on your head? Soone prickes the tree that will proone a thorne, and a Girle that loues too soone, will repent too late. What, a Husband? why, the Maides of Rome durst not looke at Venus Temple til they were thirtie, nor went they vnmasked till they were married, that neither their beauties might allure other, nor they glance their eies on euerie wanton. I tell thee, fond Girle, when Nilus ouerfloweth before his time, Ægypt is plagued with a dearth: the trees that blossome in Februarie, are nipped with the frost in May; vntimely fruits had neuer good fortune, and young Gentlewomen, that are woed and won ere they be wise, sorrow and repent before they bee old. What seest thou in Francesco, that thine eye must chuse, and thy heart must fancie? Is he beautifull? Why,

fond

fond girle, what the eye liketh at morne, it hateth at night: loue is like a bauen, but a blaze: and beauty, why how can I better compare it then to the gorgeous Cedar, that is onely for shew, nothing for profit? to the Apples of Tantalus, that are precious in the eye, and dust in the hand? to the starre Arctophylax, that is most bright but sitteth not for any Compasse? so yong men that stand vpon their outward portraiture, I tell thee they are preiudiciall: Demophoon was faire, but how dealt hee with Phyllis? Æneas was a braue man, but a dissembler: fond girle, all but little worth if they be not wealthy: And I pray thee, what substance hath Francesco to indue thee with? Hast thou not heard that want breakes amity, that loue beginneth in gold, and endeth in beggery, that such as marry but to a faire face, tie themselues oft to a foule bargaine? And what wilt thou doe with a husband that is not able to maintaine thee? Buy forsoth a dram of pleasure with a pound of sorrow, and a pint of content with a whole tunne of preiudiciall displeasures. But why doe I cast stones into the ayre, or breathe my words into the winde, when to perswade a woman from her will, is to roll Sisiphus stone: or to tie a headstrong girle from loue, is to tie the Furies again in Fetters? Therefore husbands, to preuent al misfortunes, I will be your Zaplor. And with that he carried her in, and shut her vp in his owne chamber, not giuing her leaue to depart, but when his key gaue her license; yet at last she so cunningly dissembled, that she got thus farre libertie, not to bee close prisoner, but to walke about the house: yet euery night hee shut vp her clothes, that no nightly feare of her escape might hinder his broken slumbers.

Where leauing her, let vs returne to Francesco, who to his sorrow heard of all these hard fortunes: and being pensiue, was full of many passions, but almost in despaire, as a man that durst not come nigh her fathers doore, nor send any letters whereby to comfort his Mistrisse, or to lay any plot of her liberty: for no sooner any stranger came thither, but he suspicious they came from Francesco, first sent vp his daughter into her Chamber; then, as watchfull as Argus with all his eies, hee prped into euery particular gesture and behauiour of the party: and if any iealous humour toke him in the head, he would not onely be be-

rie inquisitiue with cutting questions, but would straine curtesies, and search them very narrowly, whether they had any letters or no to his daughter Isabell.

This narrow inquisition made the poore Gentleman almost frantick, that he turned ouer *Anacreon*, *Ouid de Arte Amandi*, and all bookes that might teach him any sleights of loue: but for all their principles, his owne wit serued him for the best shift, and that was happily begun, and fortunately ended thus. It chanced, that as he walked thus in his muses, fetching the compasse of his conceit beyond the Meane, he met with a poore Woman, who as her custome was, began her *exordium* with, I pray god Master, and so forth, hoping to find the Gentleman as liberall, as he was full of gracious fauours: neither did shée misse of her imagination; for he that thought her likely to bée drawne on to the executing of his purpose, conceited thus, that gold was as good as glew to knit her to any practice whatsoeuer, and therefore out with his purse, and clapt her in the hand with a French crowne. This vnaccustomed reward made her more franck of courtesies, that euery rag reacth the Gentleman a reuerence, with promise of many prayers for his health. Hee that harped on another string, tooke the woman by the hand, and sitting downe vpon the grèn grasse, discourst vnto her from point to point the beginning and sequell of his loues, and how by no meanes (except by her) he could conuay any letter. The bragger desirous to doe the Gentleman any pleasure, said shé was ready to take any paines that might redound to his content.

Whereupon he replied thus: Then mother, thou shalt goe to yonder Abby which is her fathers house, and when thou commest thither, vse thy wonted eloquence to intreat for thy almes: if the Master of the house be present, shew thy passport, and fèrne very passionate: but if he be absent or out of the way then, oh then mother, looke about if thou sèest Diana masking in the shape of a Virgine, if thou spiest Venus, nay one more beautifull then loues Goddesse, and I tell thée she is my loue, faire Isabel, whom thou shalt discerne from her other sister thus: her visage is faire, containing as great resemblance of vertue, as lineaments of beautie, and yet I tell thée, she is full of fauour, whether thou respectst

spectst the outward portraiture or inward perfection: her eie like the Diamond, and so pointed, that it pearceth to the quicke, yet so chaste in the motion as therein is séene, as in a mirrour, courtesie tempred with a vertuous disdaine: her countenance is the very map of modesty: and to giue thée a more néere mark, if thou findest her in the way, thou shalt sée her more liberall to bestow, then thou pittifull to demand: her name is Isabel: to her from me shalt thou carry a letter, folded by euery way like a post, with a greasie backeside, and a great seale. If cunningly and closely thou canst thus conuey vnto her the tenour of my mind, when thou bringest vnto mee an answere, I will giue thee a brace of Angels. The poore woman was glad of this proffer, and thereupon promised to venture a iopnt, but shee would further him in his loues: whereupon she followed him to his chamber, and the while he writ a letter to this effect.

Segnior Francesco to faire Isabel.

WHen I note (faire Isabel) the extremity of thy fortunes, and measure of the passions of my loue, I finde that Venus hath made thée constant to requite my miseries, and that where the greatest onset is giuen by fortune, there is strongest defence made by affection: for I heard, that thy father, suspitious, or rather iealous of our late vnited simpathy, doth watch like Argus ouer Io, not suffering thée to passe beyond the reach of his eye, vnlesse (as he thinks) thou shouldst ouer-reach thy selfe. His mind is like the Tapers in Ianus Temple, that set once on fire, burne till they consume themselues: his thoughts like the Sunbeames, that search euery secret. Thus watching thée, he ouerwaketh himselfe, and yet (I hope) profiteth as little as they which gaze on the flames of Ætna, which vanish out of their sight in smoake.

I haue heard them say, (faire Isabel) that as the Diamonds are tried by cutting of glasse, the Topace by biding the force of the anuile, the Bethin wood by the hardnesse, so womens excellence is discouered in their constancie: Then if the period of all their vertues consist in this, that they take in loue by moneths, and let it slip by minutes, that as the Tortoise they creepe

pede-

pedetentim, and when they come to their reſt, will hardly be remoued. I hope thou wilt confirme in thy loues the very patterne of feminine loyalty, hauing no motion in thy thoughts, but fancie, and no affection, but to thy Franceſco. In that I am ſtopped from thy ſight, I am depriued of the chiefeſt organ of my life, hauing no ſenſe in my life perfect; in that I want the view of thy perfection, ready with ſorrow to periſh in deſpaire, if reſolued of thy conſtancy, I did not triumph in hope. Therefore now reſts it in thée to ſalue all theſe ſores, and prouide medicines for theſe dangerous maladies, that our paſſions appeaſed, we may end our harmony in the faithfull vnion of two hearts. Thou ſeeſt, Loue hath his ſhifts, and Venus quiddities are moſt ſubtile Sophiſtry; that he which is touched with beauty, is euer in league with opportunity: theſe principles are prooued by the meſſenger, whoſe ſtate diſcouers my reſtleſſe thoughts, impatient of any longer repulſe. I haue therefore ſought to ouermatch thy father in policie, as he ouerſkaines vs in iealouſie, and ſéeing hée ſéekes it, to let him find a knot in a ruſh: as therefore I haue ſent thée the ſumme of my paſſions in the forme of a paſport, returne me a reply wrapt in the ſame paper, that as wee are forced to court our deceits in one ſhift, ſo hereafter we may vnite our loues in one Simpathy: appoint what I ſhall doe to compaſſe a priuate conference. Thinke I will account of the Seas as Leander: of the Warres as Troylus: of all dangers as a man reſolued to attempt any peril, or breake any preiudice for thy ſake. Say, when, and where I ſhal méete thée, and ſo, as I begun paſſionately, I breake off abruptly. Farewell.

Thine in fatall reſolution,
Seigneur Franceſco.

After he had written the letter, & diſpatcht the meſſenger, her mind was ſo fixed on the brace of Angels, that ſhe ſtirred her old ſtumps till ſhe came to the houſe of Seigneur Fregoſo, who at that inſtant was walkt abroad, to take view of his paſtures. She no ſooner began her methode of begging with a ſolemne prayer, and a *pater noſter*, but Iſabel, whoſe deuotion

was

was euer bent to pitty the poore, came to the doze, to lie the ne-
ceſſity of the party, who begun to ſalute her thus: Faire Diſtreſs,
whoſe vertues exceede your beauties, and yet I doubt not but
you deeme your perfection equiualent with the rareſt paragons
in Britanie: as your eie receiues the obiect of my miſery, ſo let
your hart haue an inſight into my extremities, who once was
young, and then fauoured by fortune, now old and croſſed by the
deſtinies, driuen when I am weakeſt, to the wall, and when I
am worſt able, forced to hold the candle: Seeing then the faultes
of my youth haue forced the fall of mine age, and I am driuen in
the winter of my yeares, to abide the brunt of al ſtormes, let the
plentie of your youth pittie the want of my decrepite ſtate: and
the rather, becauſe my fortune was once as high as my fall is
now low: for proofe (ſweet Diſtreſs) ſee my paſport, wherein you
ſhall find my paſſions and much patience, at which period, ma-
king a curteſie, her very rags ſeemed to giue Iſabel reuerence.
She hearing the begger inſinuate with ſuch a ſenſible præam-
ble, thought the woman had had ſome good parts in her, & there-
fore tooke her certificate: which as ſoone as ſhe had opened, and
that ſhe perceiued it was Franceſcoes hand, ſhe ſmiled, and yet
bewrayed a paſſion with a bluſh. So that ſtepping from the wo-
man, ſhe went into her chamber, where ſhe read it ouer with
ſuch patheticall impreſſions, as euery motion was intangled
with a dilemma: for on the one ſide, the loue of Franceſco groun-
ded more on his interiour vertues, then his exteriour beauties,
gaue ſuch fierce aſſaults to the bulwark of her affections, as the
Fort was ready to be yéelded vp: but that the feare of her Fa-
thers diſpleaſure, armed with the inſtigations of nature, drawe
her to meditate thus with her ſelfe.

Now Iſabel, Loue and Fortune haue brought thee into a
labyrinth, thy thoughts are like Ianus pictures, that preſent both
peace and warre, and thy minde like Venus Anuile, whereon is
hammered both Feare and Hope: Sith then the chance lieth in
thine owne choice, doe not with Medea, ſee and allow of the beſt,
and then follow the worſt: but of two extremes, if they be *Im-
mediata*, chooſe that may haue leaſt preiudice, and moſt profit.
Thy father is aged, and wiſe, and many yeares hath taught
him much experience. The old Fore is more ſubtile than the

young Cub, the Bucke more skilfull to chose his foode then the young Fawnes. Men of age, feare and fore-see that which youth leapeth at with repentance. If then his graue wisdome exceedes thy greene wit, and his ripened fruites thy sprouting blossoms, thinke if he speake for thy auaile, as his principles are perfect, so they are grounded on Loue and Nature. It is a neere collop, sayes he, is cut of thy owne flesh, and the stay of thy Fortunes, is the staffe of thy life: no doubt hee sees with a more piercing iudgement into the life of Francesco: for thou ouercome with fancie, censurest of all his actions with partialitie. Francesco, though he be young and beautifull, yet his reuenewes are not answerable to his fauours: the Cedar is faire, but vnfruitfull, the Volgo a bright streame, but without fish: men couet rather to plant the Oliue for profit, then the Alder for beauty, and young Gentlewomen should rather fancy to liue, then affect to lust: for loue without lands, is like to a fire without fewell, that for a while sheweth a bright blaze, and in a moment dieth in his owne cinders. Dost thou thinke this, Isabel, that thine eie may not surfet so with beautie, that the minde shall vomite vp repentance? yes, for the fairest Roses haue prickes, the purest lawnes their moles, the brightest Diamonds their crackes, and the most beautifull men of the most imperfect conditions; for nature hauing care to polish the body so faire, ouerweenes her selfe in her excellency, that she leaues their minds imperfect. Whither now Isabel, into absurd Aphorismes? What, can thy Father perswade thee to this, that the most glorious shels haue not the most orient margarites, that the purest flowers haue not the most perfect sauours, that men, as they excel in proportion of body, so they exceede in perfection of minde? Is not nature both curious and absolute, hiding the most vertuous minds in the most beautifull couertures? Why, what of this, fond girle? Suppose these promises to be granted, yet they infer no conclusion: for suppose he bee beautifull and vertuous, and his wit is equall with his parentage, yet he wants wealth to maintaine Loue, and therefore, saies old Fregoso, not worthy of Isabels loue. Shall I then tie my affection to his Lands or to his lineaments? To his riches, or his qualities? Are Venus altars to be filled with gold, or loyaltie of harts? Is the simpathy of Cupids consistory vnited

in

in the abundance of coyne: or the absolute perfection of constancie? Ah Isabel, thinke this, that loue brooketh no exception of want, that where Fancie displaies her colours, there alwaies either Plentie keeps her court, or else Patience so tempers euery extreme, that all defects are supplied with content. Vpon this, as hauing a further reach, and a deeper insight, she kept hastily to her Standish, and writ him this answere.

Isabel to *Francesco*, health.

ALthough the nature of a Father, and the duty of a childe, might moue me resolutely to reiect thy letters, yet I receiued them, for that thou art Francesco, and I Isabel, who were once priuate in affection, as now we are distant in places. But know, my father, whose command to me is a law of constraint, sets downe this censure, that loue without wealth, is like to a Cedar tree without fruite, or to corne sowne in the sandes, that withereth for want of moysture: and I haue reason Francesco to deeme of snow by the whitenesse, and of trées by the blossoms. The old man, whose wordes are Oracles, telles me, that loue that entereth in a moment, flieth out in a minute; that mens affections are like the dewe vpon a Christall, which no sooner lighteth on, but it leapeth off: their eyes with euery glance make a new choice, and euery looke can commaund a sigh, hauing their hearts like Salt-péter, that fireth at the first, and yet powreth but a flash; their thoughts reaching as high as Cedars, but as brittle as rods, that breake with euery blast. Had Carthage beene bereft of so famous a Virago, if the Troian had been as constant as he was comely? Had the Queene of Poetrie been pinched with so many passions, if the wanton Ferriman had been as faithfull as he was faire? No, Francesco, and therefore séeing the brightest blossomes are pestered with most Caterpillers, the sweetest Roses with the sharpest prickes, the fairest Cambrickes with the foulest staines, and men with the best proportion, haue commonly least perfection; I may feare to swallow the hooke, lest I finde more bane in the confection, then pleasure in the bait. But here let me breathe, and with sighs forsée mine owne folly. Women, poore soules, are like to the Harts in Calabria, that knowing Dictamum to bee

deadly, yet browſe on it with greedineſſe: reſembling the Fiſh Mugra, that ſeing the hook bare, yet ſwallowes it with delight: ſo women fore-ſee, yet do not preuent, knowing what is profitable, yet not eſchewing the prejudice: So Franceſco, I ſee thy beauties, I know thy want, and I feare thy vanities, yet can I not but allow of all, were they the worſt of all, becauſe I finde in my mind this principle: In Loue is no lacke. What ſhould I Franceſco, couet to dally with the mouſe, when the Cat ſtandes by, or fill my letter ful of needleſſe ambages, when my father, like Argus, ſetteth a hundred eyes to ouer-prie my actions? while I am writting, thy meſſenger ſtands at the doore praying: therefore, leſt I ſhould hold her too long in her orisons, or kéepe thée (poore man) too long in ſuſpence: thus briefely: Be vpon Thurſday next at night, hard by the Orchard vnder the greateſt Oke, where expect my comming, prouide for our ſafe paſſage: for ſtoode all the world on the one ſide, and thou on the other, Franceſco ſhould be my guide, to direct me whither he pleaſed. Faile not then, vnleſſe thou be falſe to her, that would haue life faile, ere ſhe falſifie faith to thée.

Not her owne, becauſe thine, *Iſabel.*

AS ſoone as ſhe had diſpatcht her letter, ſhe came downe, & deliuered the letter in forme of a paſport to the meſſenger, giuing her after her accuſtomed manner an almes, and cloſely clapt her in the fiſt with a brace of Angels. The woman thanking her good Maſter, and her good Miſtris, giuing the houſe her benizon, hied her backe againe to Franceſco, whom ſhe found ſitting ſolitarie in his Chamber: no ſooner did hee eſpie her, but ſtinging out of his chaire, he changed colour, as a mã in a doubtfull extaſie what ſhould betide: yet concelning good hope by her countenance, who ſmiled more at the remembrance of her reward, then at any other conceite, hée tooke the letter, and read it, wherein he found his humour ſo fitted, that he not only thanked the meſſenger, but gaue her all the money in his purſe, ſo that ſhe returned ſo highly gratified, as neuer afterward ſhee was found to exerciſe her old occupation. But leaning her to the hope of her good wifery, againe to Franceſco, who ſeing the conſtant affection of his Miſtris, that neither the ſowre lookes of her father,

ther, nor his hard threates could affright her, to make change of her fancy, that no disaster fortune could driue her to make shipwracke of her fixed affection, that the blustring stormes of aduersity might assault, but not sack the fort of her constant resolution, hée fell into this pleasing passion: Women (quoth he) why, as they are heauens wealth, so they are earths miracles, framed by nature to despight beauty, adorned with the singularitie of proportion, to showd the excellency of all perfection, as far exceéding men in vertues, as they excell them in beauties, resembling Angels in qualities, as they are like to Gods in perfectnesse, being purer in mind, then in mould, & yet made of the purity of man: iust are they, as giuing Loue her due: constant, as holding loyalty more precious then life: as hardly to be drawne from vnited affection, as the Salamanders from the cauerns of Ætna. Tush (quoth Francesco) what should I say they be women, and therefore the continents of all excellencie. In this pleasãt humor he passed away the time, not slacking his busines for prouision against Thursday at night: to the care of which affaires, let vs leaue him, and returne to Isabel, who after shee had sent her letter, fell into a dumpe, entring into considerations of mens inconstancy, & of the ficklenes of their fancies: but all these meditations did sort to no effect: whereupon sitting downe, she tooke her Lute in her hand, and sung this Ode.

Isabels Ode.

SItting by a Riuers side,
Where a silent streame did glide,
Bancke about with choice of flowers,
Such as spring from Aprill, showers
When faire *Iris* smiling, shewes
All her riches in her dewes,
Thick leaued trees so were planted,
As not Art nor Nature wanted
Bordering all the brooke with shade,
As if *Venus* there had made
By *Floraes* wile, a curious bowre
To dally with her paramoure.

At this current as I gazd,
Eyes intrapt, minde amazde,
I might see in my ken,
Such a flame as fiereth men:
Such a fire as doth frie,
With one blaze both hart and eye,
Such a heate as doth proue
No heate like to the heate of loue.
Bright she was, for 'twas a she,
That trac'd her steps towards me:
On her head she ware a bay,
To fence *Phœbus* light away:
In her face one might descry
The curious beautie of the skie.
Her eies carried darts of fire,
Feathered all with swift desire:
Yet forth these fiery darts did passe,
Pearled teares as bright as glasse,
That wonder 'twas in her eyne,
Fire and water should combine:
If th' old Saw did not borrow,
Fire is loue, and water sorrow.
Downe she sate, pale and sad,
No mirth in her lookes she had,
Face and eies shew'd distresse,
Inward sighs discourst no lesse:
Head and hand might I see:
Elbow leaned on her knee,
Last she breathed out this Saw,
Oh that loue hath no law,
Loue inforceth with constraint,
Loue delighteth in complaint,
Who so loues, hates his life,
For loues peace is minds strife.
Loue doth feede on beauties fare,
Euery dish sawc'd with care:
Chiefely women, reason why,
Loue is hatcht in their eye:

Thence

Thence it steppeth to the hart,
There it poysneth euery part
Mind and hart, eye and thought,
Till sweet loue their woes haue wrought.
Then repentant they gan cry,
Oh my hart that trowed mine eie.
Thus she said, and then she rose,
Face and mind both full of woes:
Flinging thence with this Saw,
Fie on loue that hath no law.

Hauing finished her Ode, shee heard that her Father was come in, and therefore leauing her amorous instruments, she fell to her labour, to confirme the old prouerb in her fathers iealous head, *Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus*: but as warie as shee was, yet the old Goose could spie the Gosling winke, and would not by any meanes trust her, but vsed his accustomed manner of restraint: yet as it is impossible for the smoke to be concealed, or fire to bee suppressed: so Fregoso could not by subtile drifts so warily watch his transformed Io, but she found a Mercury to release her. For vpon Thursday lying in her bedde with little intent to sleepe, she offered many sighs to Venus, that shee would be Dyatresse to Morpheus, that some dead slumber might possesse all the house: which fell out accordingly, so that at midnight she rose vp, and finding her apparrel shut vp, she was faine to goe without hose, onely in her smocke and her petticoats, with her fathers hat and an old cloake. Thus attired like Diana in her night geere, she marcheth downe softly, where shee found Francesco ready with a priuate and familiar friend of his to watch her comming forth, who, casting his eie aside, and seeing one in a hat and a cloake, suspecting some treacherie, drew his sword: at which Isabel smiling, she incountred him thus.

Gentle sir, if you be as valiant as you seeme cholericke, or as martiall as you would bee thought hardie, set not vpon a weaponlesse woman, lest in thinking to triumph in so meane a conquest, you be preiudiced with the taint of cowardise. Was neuer yet read, that warlike Mars drew his Fawchion against louely Venus, were her offence neuer so great, or his Choler

neuer.

neuer so much. Therefore Gentleman, if you be the man I take you, Isabels Francesco, leaue off your armes, and fall to amours, and let your parley in them bee as short, as the night is silent, and the time dangerous. Francesco seeing it was the Paramour of his affections, let fall his sword, and caught her in his armes, ready to fall in a sound by a sudden extasie of ioy: at last recouering his sence, he encountred her thus.

Faire Isabel, Natures ouermatch in beauty, as you are Dianaes superiour in vertue: at the sight of this attire, I drew my sword, as fearing some priuy foe: but as soone as the view of your perfection glanced as an obiect to mine eye, I let fal my armes, trembling as Acteon did, that hee had dared too farre in gazing against so gorgeous a Goddesse: yet readie in the defence of your sweet selfe, and rather then I would lose so rich a prize, not only to take vp my weapon, but to encounter hand to hand with the stoutest champion in the world. Sir (quoth shee) these protestations are now bootlesse: and therefore to be briefe, thus (and with that the teares trickled downe the vermilion of her cheeks, and she blubbered out this passion,) O Francesco, thou maist see by my attire the depth of my fancie, and in these homely roabes maist thou note the reatchlesnesse of my fortunes, that for thy loue haue strained a note too high in loue, I offend Nature as repugnant to my Father, whose displeasure I haue purchast to please thee: I haue giuen a finall farewell to my friends, to bee thy familiar: I haue lost all hope of preferment, to confirme the simpathie of both our desires: ah Francesco, see, I come thus poore in apparrell, to make thee rich in content. Now if hereafter, (Oh let me sigh at that, lest I bee forced to repent too late) when thy eye is glutted with my beautie, and thy hotte loue prooued soone cold, then beginst thou to hate her that thus loueth thee, and proue as Demophoon did to Phillis, or as Æneas did to Dido. What then may I doe reiected, but accurse mine owne follie, that hath brought me to such hard fortunes? Giue me leaue, Francesco, to feare what may fall: for men are as inconstant in performance, as cunning in practises. She could not fully discourse what she was about to vtter, but he broke off with this protestation: Ah Isabel, although the windes of Lepanthus are euer inconstant, the Christall euer brittle, the Po-

lipa

lips euer changeable: yet measures not my minde by other motion, nor the depth of my affection by the fleeting of other fancies: for as there is a Topace that will yeld to euery stampe, so there is an Emerald that will yeeld no impression. The selfe same Troy, as it had an Æneas that was fickle, so it had Troilus that was constant. Greece had a Pyramus, as it had a Demophoon: and though some haue been ingratefull, yet accuse not all to be vnthankefull: for when Francesco shall let his eie slip from thy beauty, or his thoughts from thy qualities, or his heart from thy vertues, or his whole life from euer honouring thee: then shall heauen cease to haue Starres, the earth Trees, the world Elements, and euery thing reuersed, shal fall to their former chaos.

Why then (quoth Isabel) to horsebacke, for feare the faith of two such Louers bee impeached by my fathers wakefull iealousie. And with that (poore woman) halfe naked as shee was, she mounted, and as fast as horse would pace away, they post towards a towne in the said country of Brittaine, called Duncastrũ. Where let vs leaue them in their false gallop, and returne to old Fregoso, who rising early in the morning, & missing his daughter, askt for her through the whole house: but seeing none could discouer where she was, as assured of her escape, he cried out as a man halfe lunaticke, that hee was by Francesco robd of his onely iewell. Whereupon in a despairing furie he caused al his men and his tenants to mount them, and to disperse themselues euery one with hue and cry for the recouery of his daughter, hee himselfe being horst, and riding the readie way to Duncastrum. Where hee no sooner came, but Fortune meaning to dally with the old dotard, and to present him a bone to gnaw on, brought it so to passe, that as he came riding downe the towne, hee met Francesco, and his daughter comming from the Church, which although it pierst him to the quicke, and strained euery string of his heart to the highest note of sorrow, yet he concealed it till hee tooke his Inne: and then stumbling as fast as hee could to the Maiors house of the Towne, hee reuealed vnto him the whole cause of his distresse, requiring his fauour for the clapping vp of this vnruely gentleman: and to make the matter more heinous, he accused him of felony, that he had not onely, contrary to the

 custome

custome bereft him of his daughter against his will, but with his daughter, had taken away certaine plate. This euidence caused the Mayor straight, guarded with his Officers, to march downe with Fregoso, to the place where Isabel and her Francesco were at breakefast, little thinking (poore soules) such a sharpe storme should follow so quiet a calme: but fortune would haue it so. And therefore, as they were carowsing each to other in a sweete frolike of hoped for content, the Mayor rusht in, and apprehended him of felony: which draue the poore perplexed louers into such a dumpe, that they stood as the pictures, that Perseus with his shield turned into stones. Francesco presently with a sharpe insight, entred into the cause, & perceiued it was the drift of the old Fore his Father in law: wherefore he toke it with the more patience. But Isabel seeing her new husband so handled, fell into a swound for sorrow, which could not preuaile with the Sergeants, but they conueyed him to prison, and her to the Maiors house. As soone as this was done. Fregoso, as a man careleste what should become of them, in a strange Countrie, tooke horse and rode home: he past melancholy, and these remained sorrowfull, especially Isabel, who after she had almost blubbred out her eyes for griefe, fell at length into this passion.

Infortunate Isabel, and therefore infortunate, because thy sorrowes are more then thy yeares, and thy distresse too heauie for the prime of thy youth. Are the heauens so vniust, the starres so dismal, the planets so iniurious, that they haue more contrarie oppositions then fauourable aspects? that their influence doth infuse more preiudice, then they can inferre profite? Then no doubt if their motions bee so maligne, Saturne conspiring with all balefull signes, calculated the houre of thy birth full of disaster accidents. Ah Isabel, thou maist see, the birds that are hatched in winter, are nipt with euery storme, such as flye against the sunne, are either scorched or blinded, and those that repugne against nature, are euer crost by fortune. Thy father foresaw these euils, and warned thee by experience, thou reiectedst his counsaile, and therefore art bitten with repentance: such as loke not before they leape, oft fall into the ditch: and they that scorne their parents, cannot auoide punishment: The young Tigers follow the braying of their old Sire; the tender Fawnes those their

their foode by the old Sucke: These brute beasts, and without reason, stray not from the limites of nature: thou a woman, and endued with reason, art therefore thus sorrowfull, because thou hast been vnnaturall. Whither now Isabel? What, like the shrubs of India, parched with euery storme? Wilt thou resemble the brookes of Carnia, that dry vp with euery Sun-shine? Shall one blast of Fortune blemish al thy affection: one frowne of thy father infringe thy loue toward thy husband? Wilt thou be so inconstant at the first, that hast promised to be loyall euer? If thou hast danted on thy marriage day, thou wilt bee fleeting hereafter: Didst thou not choose him for his vertues, and now wilt thou refuse him for his hard fortunes? Is he not thy husband? yes, and therefore more deere to thee then thy Father. I, Isabel, and vpon that resolue, lest hauing so faithfull a Troylus, thou prooue as hatefull as Cressida: sorrow Isabel, but not that thou followedst Francesco, but that Francesco by thē is falne into such misfortunes: seeke to mitigate his malladies by thy patience, not to incense his griefe with thy passions: courage is knowne in extremities, womanhood in distresse: and as the Chrisolite is proued in the fire, and the diamond by the anuile, so loue is tried not by fauour of Fortune, but by the aduersity of time. Therefore *Isabel, Feras non culpes, quod vitare non potes*, and with Tully resolue thus:

Puta rerum humanarum nihil esse firmum; nec in prosperis latitia gesties, nec in aduersis dolore concides.

With this she held her peace, and rested silent, so behauing her selfe in the Mayors house, with such modesty and patience, that as they held her for a Paragon of beauty, so they counted her for a spectacle of vertue: thinking her outward proportion was far inferiour to her inward perfection: so that generally she wan the hearts of the whole house, in that they pitied her case, & wished her libertie. Insomuch, that Francesco was the better vsed for her sake: who being imprisoned, grieued not at his owne sinister mis-hap, but sorrowed for the Fortune of Isabel, passing both day and night with many extreme passions, to thinke on the distresse of his beloued Paramour. Fortune, who had wrought this tragedy, intending to shew that her front is as full of fauours as of frownes, and that shē holds a dimple in her cheeke.

as shee hath a wrincle in her brow, began thus in a Commical veine to be pleasant. After many dayes were passed, and that the Mayor had entred into the good demeanour of them both, noting, that it proceeded rather of the displeasure of the father, then for any speciall desert of felony, seeing youth would haue his swinge, and that as the minerals of Ætna fome fire, as the leaues in Parthia burne in the Sunne, so young yeeres are incident to the heate of loue, and affection will burst into such amorous parties: Hee not as Chremes in Terence, measuring the flames of youth by his dead cinders, but thinking of their present fortunes by the follies of their former age, called a Conuenticle of his brethren, and seeing there was none to giue any further euidence, thought to let Francesco loose. Hauing their free consent, the next day taking Isabel with him, he went to the Jayle, where they heard such rare reportes of the behauiour of Francesco, that they sorrowed not so much at his fortunes, as they wondred at his vertues: for the Jaylor discourst vnto them how, as he was greatly passionate, so he vsed great patience, hauing this verse oft in his mouth:

Fortiter ille facit, qui miser esse potest.

That he was affable and courteous, winning all, & offending none, that all his house, as they grieued at his imprisonment, would be sorry at his inlargement: not for enuy of his person, but for sorrow of his absence. The Jaylor thus commending the Gentleman, conducted them to the chamber doore, where Francesco lay, whom they found in secret meditation with himselfe: therefore they staied, and were silent Auditors to his passions: the first word they heard him breathe out with a sigh, was this,

Soufrir me plaist, car l' espoir me conforte.

And with that, taking a Citterne in his hand, saying this note,

Pour paruenir I' endure.

He warbled out this Ode.

Francescoes Ode.

WHen I looked about the place
Where sorrow nurseth vp disgrace,

Wrapt

Wrapt with a fold of cares,
Whoſe diſtreſſe no heart ſpares:
Eyes might looke, but ſee no light,
Heart might thinke, but no delpight,
Sunne did ſhine, but not on me,
Sorrow ſaid, it may not bee,
That heart or eie ſhould once poſſeſſe
Any ſalue to cure diſtreſſe:
For men in priſon muſt ſuppoſe,
Their couches are the beds of woes:
Seeing this, I ſighed then,
Fortune thus ſhould puniſh men.
But when I cald to mind her face,
For whoſe loue I brooke this place,
Starry eyes, whereat my ſight
Did eclipſe with much delight,
Eyes that lighten, and doe ſhine,
Beames of loue that are diuine,
Lilly cheekes whereon beſide,
Buds of Roſes ſhew their pride,
Cherry lips, which did ſpeake
Words that made all hearts to breake,
Words moſt ſweet, for breath was ſweete,
Such perfumes for loue is meete:
Precious words, as hard to tell,
Which more pleaſed, wit or ſmell.
When I ſaw my greateſt paines
Grow for her that beauty ſtaines,
Fortune thus I did reproaue.
Nothing griefeſull growes from loue.

Hauing thus chaunted ouer his Ode, hee heard the chamber dooze open, wh reupon he grew melancholie; but when he ſaw the goddeſſe of his affection, on whoſe conſtant loyalty depended the eſſence of his happineſſe, hee ſtarted vp, as when loue-ſick Mars ſaw Venus entring his pauilion in triumph, entertaining them all generally with ſuch affabilitie, and her particularly with ſuch courteſie, that hee ſhewed himſelfe as full of nurture as of nature. Interchange of entertainment thus paſt betweene

these two louers, as well with emphasis of wordes, as extalle of mindes, concluding with streames of pathetical teares. The Mayor at last entred parley, and felde Francesco, though his Father in law had alleaged felony against him, yet because he perceiued, that it rather proceeded of some secret reuenge, thē any manifest truth, and that no further euidence came to censure the allegation, he was content to set him at libertie, conditionally, Francesco should giue his hand, to bee answerable to what hereafter in that behalfe might bee obiected against him. These conditions accepted, Francesco was set at libertie, and hee and Isabel ioyntly together taking themselues to a little Cottage, began to be as Ciceronicall as they were amorous: with their hands thrift coueting to satisfie their hearts thirst, and to be as diligent in labours, as they were affectionate in loues: so that the parish wherin they liued, so affected them for the course of their life, that they were counted the very mirrors of a Democraticall methode: for he being a Scholer, and nurst vp in the Vniuersities, resolued rather to liue by his wit, then any way to be pinched with want, thinking this old sentence to be true, That wishers and woulders were neuer good house-holders; therfore he applied himselfe in teaching of a Schoole, where, by his industry, hee had not onely great fauour, but gate wealth to withstand fortune. Isabel, that shee might seeme no lesse profitable, then her husband carefull, fell to her needle, and with her worke, sought to preuent the iniurie of necessitie. Thus they laboured to maintain their loues, being as busie as Bees and as true as Turtles, as desirous to satisfie the world with their desert, as to feede the humours of their owne desires. Liuing thus in a league of vnited vertues, out of this mutuall concord of confirmed perfection, they had a Sonne answerable to their owne proportion, which did increase their amitie, so as the sight of their young infant was a double ratifying of their affection. Fortune and loue thus ioyning in league, to make these parties to forget the stormes, that had nipped the blossoms of their former yeres, addicted to the content of their loues this cōclusion of blisse. After the terme of fiue yeres, Segnior Fregoso hearing by sundrie reports, the fame of their forwardnesse, how Francesco coueted to be most loying to his daughter, and shee most dutifull to him,

and

and both striue to exceede one another in loyaltie, glad at this mutuall agreement, hee fell from the furie of his former melancholly passions, and satisfied himselfe with a contented patience, that at last he directed letters to his Son in Law, that he should make repaire to his house with his daughter. Which newes was no sooner come to the eares of this maried couple, but prouiding for all things necessarie for the furniture of their voyage, they posted as fast as they could towards Caerbranck, where speedily arriuing at their Fathers house, they found such friendly entertainement at the old mans hand that they counted this smile of Fortune able to counteruaile all the contrary stormes, that the aduerse planets had inflicted vpon them.

Seated thus, as they thought, so surely, as no sinister chance, or dismall influence might remooue, Shee that is constant in nothing but inconstancy, beganne in faire skie to produce a tempest thus.

It so chanced, that Francesco had necessarie businesse to dispatch at the chiefe Citie of that Iland, called Troynouant, thither with the leaue of his Father, and farewell to his wife, he departed, after they were married seuen yeeres: where, after he was arriued, knowing that he should make his abode there for the space of some nine weekes; hee sold his horse, and hired him a chamber, earnestly endeuouring to make speedie dispatch of his affaires, that hee might the sooner enioy the sight of his desired Isabel; for did he see any woman beautifull, he viewed her with a sigh, thinking how farre his wife did surpasse her in excellence: were the modestie of any woman well noted by her qualities, it grieued him he was not at home with his Isabel, who did excell them all in vertues.

Thus he construed al to her perfection, hauing no vacant time neither day nor night, wherein he did not ruminate on the perfection of Isabel. As thus his thoughts were diuided on his businesse, and on his wife, looking one day out at his Chamber window, hee espied a young Gentlewoman which lo'ed out at a casement right opposite against his prospect, who fired her eyes vpon him with such cunning and artificiall glaunces, as she shewed in them a chaste disdaine, and yet a modest desire. Where (by the way Gentlemen) let me say thus much, that our

Cur-

Curtizans of Venice, are far superior in artificiall allurement to them of all the world: for although they haue not the painting of *Italie*, nor the charmes of *France*, nor the Iewels of *Spaine*, yet they haue in their eyes Adamants, that will draw youth as the Ieat the straw, or ỹ sight of the panther the trimly: their looks are like lures that will reclaime, and like Cyrces apparitions, that can represent in them al motions: they containe modestie, mirth, chastity, wantonnes, and what not: and she that holdeth in her eie most ciuility, hath oft in her hart most dishonestie, being like the pyrit stone, that is fire without, & frost within. Such a one was this merry minio, whose honestie was as choice as Venus chastitie, being as faire as Helena, and as faithlesse: as well featured as Cressida, and as crafty: hauing an eie for euery passenger, a sigh for euery louer, a smile for euery one that vailo his bonnet: and because she loued the game well, a quiuer for euery Woodmans arrow. This curtizan, seeing this country Francesco was no other but a meere nouice, & that so newly, that to vse the old prouerbe, he had scarce seene the Lions: She thought to intrap him, and so arrest him with her amorous glances, that she should wring him by the purse: whereupon euery day she would stand out at her casement, & there discouer her beauties. Francesco, who was like the flie that delighted in the flame, and coueted to feed with his eie on this beauteous Curtizã, tilted at her with interchange of glances, and on a day to try the fineneſſe of his wit, with a poeticall fury, began thus to make a Canzone.

CANZONE.

As when the Sunne sate lordly in his pride,
Nor shadowed with the vaile of any cloude,
The welkin had no racke that seem'd to guide,
No duskie vapour did bright *Phœbus* shroude,
No blemish did eclipse the beauteous skie,
From serring forth heauens secret-searching eie
No blustering wind did shake the shady trees,
Each leafe lay still and silent in the wood,
The birds were musicall; the labouring Bees,
That in the summer heapes their winters good,

Plied

Plied to the hiues ſweet honey from thoſe flowers,
Whereout the Serpent ſtrengthens all his powers.
The Lyon laid and ſtretcht him in the lawnes,
No ſtorme did hold the Leopard from his prey,
The fallow fields were full of wanton Fawnes,
The plow-ſwaines neuer ſaw a fairer day:
For euery beaſt and bird did take delight:
To ſee the quiet heauens to ſhine ſo bright.
When thus the windes lay ſleeping in the Caues,
The ayre was ſilent in her concaue ſpheare,
And *Neptune* with a calme did pleaſe the ſlaues,
Ready to waſh the neuer drenched Beare,
Then did the change of my affects begin,
And wanton Loue aſſaid to ſnare me in.
Leaning my backe againſt a lofty pine,
Whoſe top did checke the pride of all the ayre:
Fixing my thoughts, and with my thoughts, mine eine,
Vpon the Sun, the faireſt of all faire:
What thing made God ſo faire as this, quoth I?
And thus I muzde vntill I darkt mine eye.
Finding the Sun too glorious for my ſight,
I glanſt my looke to ſhun ſo bright a lampe:
With that appeard an obiect twice as bright,
So gorgeous as my ſenſes all were dampt,
In *Ida* richer beauty did not win,
When louely *Venus* ſhew'd her ſiluer skin.
Her pace was like to *Iunoes* pompous ſtraines,
When as ſhe ſweeps through heauens braſſe-paued way,
Her front was powdred through with azurd veines,
That twixt ſweet Roſes and faire Lillies lay:
Reflecting ſuch a mixture from her face,
As tainted *Venus* Beautie with diſgrace:
Artophylax the brighteſt of the ſtarres,
Was not ſo orient as her chriſtall eyes,
Wherein triumphant ſate both Peace and Warres,
From out whoſe arches ſuch ſweete fauour flies,
As might reclaime *Mars* in his higheſt rage,
At beauties charge his fury to aſſwage.

The Diamond gleames not more reflecting lights,
Painted with fiery pyramides to shine,
Than are those flames that burnish in our sights,
Darting fire out the christall of her eyne,
Able to set *Narcissus* thoughts on fire,
Although he swore him foe to sweete desire;
Gazing vpon this Lemman with mine eye,
I felt my sight vaile bonet with her lookes,
So deepe a passion to my heart did flie,
As I was trapt within her luring lookes,
Forc't to confesse, before that I had done,
Her beauty far more brighter then the Sunne.

Francesco hauing thus in a poeticall humour pleased his fancie, when his leisure serued him, would, to make proofe of his constancie, interchange amorous glances with this faire Curtizan, whose name was Infida, thinking his inward affections were so surely grounded on the vertues of his Isabel, that no exterior proportion could effect any passion to the contrary: but at last he found by experience, that the fairest blossomes are soonest nipt with frosts, the best fruit soonest touched with Caterpillers, and the ripest wittes most apt to be ouerthrowne by loue. Infida taught him with her lookes to learne this, that the eye of the Basiliske pierceth with preiudice: that the iuyce of Celidonie is sweet, but it fretteth deadly: that Circes cups were too strong for all Antidotes, and womens flatteries too forceable to resist at voluntarie: for she so snared him in her perfection, insomuch that he thought her second to Isabel, if not superiour. Dallying thus with beautie, as the flye in the flame: Venus willing to shew how forceable her influence was, so tempted with opportunitie, that as Francesco walked abroad to take the ayre, he met with Infida gadding abroad with certaine her companions, who like blazing Starres shewed the markes of inconstant minions; for shee no sooner drew neere Francesco, but dying her face with a Vermillion blush, and in a wanton eye hiding a fained modesty, she saluted him with a low courtesie. Segnior Francesco, that could well skill to court all kinde of degrées, lest he might then be thought to haue little manners, returning, not

onely

onely her curteſies with his bonnet, but taking Infida by the hand, began thus: Faire Miſtreſſe, and if mine eye be not deceiued in ſo bright an obiect; mine ouerthwart neighbour, hauing often ſeene with delight, and coueted with deſire to be acquainted with your ſweet ſelfe, I cannot now but gratulate fortune with many thankes, that hath offered ſuch fitte opportunity to bring me to your preſence, hoping I ſhall find you ſo friendly, as to craue that we may be more familiar. She that knew how to entertaine ſuch a young nouice, made him this cunning reply. Indæde ſir, neighbourhood craues charitie, and ſuch affable Gentlemen as your ſelfe, deſerue rather to be entertained with curteſie, then reiected with diſdaine. And therefore Sir, what priuate friendſhip mine honour or honeſty may afforde, you aboue all (that hitherto I haue knowne) ſhalt commaund. Then Miſtriſſe (quoth he) for that euery man counts it credite to haue a patroneſſe of his fortunes, and I am a meere ſtranger in this City, let me finde ſuch fauour, that all my actions may be ſhrowded vnder your excellence, and carry the name of your Seruant, ready for requitall of ſuch gracious countenance, to vnſheath my ſword in the defence of my Patroneſſe for euer. She that had her humour fitted with this motion, anſwered thus, with a looke that had beene able to haue forced Troylus to haue been trothleſſe to his Creſſida: How kindely I take it, Seignior Franceſco, for ſo I vnderſtand your name, that you proffer your ſeruice to ſo meane a Miſtreſſe, the effectuall fauour that ſhall, to my poore abilitie, gratifie your curteſie, ſhall manifeſt how I account of ſuch a friend. Therefore from henceforth Infida entertaines Franceſco for her ſeruant: and I (quoth ſhe) accept of the beauteous Infida as my Miſtreſſe. Vpon this, they fell into other amorous prattle, which I leaue off, and walked abroad while it was dinner time. Franceſco ſtill hauing his eye vpon his new Miſtreſſe, whoſe beauties he thought, if they were equally tempered with vertues, to exceed all that yet his eye had made ſurueye of. Doating thus on this new face with a new fancy, he often wroong her by the hand, and brake off his ſentences, with ſuch deepe ſighes, that ſhe perceiued by the weather-cocke, where the wind blew: returning ſuch amorous paſſions, as ſhe ſeemed as much entangled, as he was enamoured.

Well, thinking now that she had baited her hook, she would not cease while she had fully caught the fish, she began thus to lay the traine. When they were come neere to the Citty gates she staied on a sudden, and straining him hard by the hand, and glauncing a look from her eyes, as if she would both shew fauor, and craue affection, she began thus smilingly to assault him.

Seruant, the Lawyers say, the *assumsit* is neuer good, where the partie giues not somewhat in consideration: that seruice is voide, where it is not made fast by some fee. Lest therefore your eye should make your mind variable, as mens thoughts follow their sights, & their looks wauer at the excellēce of new obiects, and so I lose such a seruant: to tie you to a stake with an earnest, you shall be this day my guest at dinner: then if hereafter you forget your mistris, I shall appeale at the barre of loyaltie, and so condemne you of lightnesse. Francesco that was tied by the eie, and had his hart on his halfpenny, could not deny her, but with many thankes accepted of her motion, so that agreed, they went all to Iosidaes house to dinner, where they had such cheere, as could vpon the sudden be prouided. Iosida giuing him such friendly and familiar entertainement at his repast, as wel with sweet prattle, as with amorous glances, that he rested captiue within the labyrinth of flatteries: After dinner was done, that she might tie him from starting, shee thought to set all her wits vpon Ela. Therefore she tooke a Lute in her hand, and in an angelicall harmony warbled out this conceited Dittie.

Infidaes Song.

SWeet *Adon* darst not glance thine eie,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy,
Vpon thy *Venus* that must die?
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

See how sad thy *Venus* lies,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy,
Loue in heart, and teares in eies,

Ie

Ie vous en prie, pittie me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

Thy face is faire as *Paphos* brookes,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy,
Wherein fancy baites her hookes,
Ie vous en prie, pittie me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

Thy cheekes like cherries that do grow,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy,
Amongst the Westerne Mounts of snow.
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

Thy lips vermillion full of loue,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.
Thy necke as siluer, white as doue,
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

Thine eyes like flames of holy fires,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.
Burne all my thoughts with sweet desires,
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

All thy beauties fling my hart,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.
I must die through *Cupids* dart,
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

Wilt thou let thy *Venus* die,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy,
Adon were vnkind, say I,
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

To let faire *Venus* die for woe,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy,
That doth loue sweet *Adon* so,
Ie vous en prie, pitty me:
N' oseres vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N' oseres vous, mon bel amy.

While thus Infida sung her song, Francesco sate, as if with Orpheus melody hee had bæn inchaunted, hauing his eyes fixed on her face, and his eares attendant on her musicke, so that hee yeelded to that Syren, which after forc't him a fatall shipwracke. Infida laying away her Lute, after fell to other prattle. But because it grew late in the afternoone, Francesco, that was called away by his vrgent affaires, tooke his leaue: whereat Infida sæmed very melancholy, which made our young Scholler halfe mad, yet with a solemne congé departing, he went about his businesse: whereas our cunning Curtizan, sæing her nouice gone, began to smile, and said to her companions, that shee had made a good market that had caught such a tame fole. Alas poore young Gentleman (quoth she) he is like to the leaues in Ægypt, that as they spring without raine, so they burne at the sight of the fire: or to the Swallowes, that thinke euery Sunne shine Summers day. Hee was neuer long waiter in Venus Court, that counts euery smile a fauour, & euery laugh to bee true loue: but it is no matter, hee hath store of pence, and I will sell him many passions, vntil I leaue him as empty of coyneing my selfe is void of fancy. And thus leauing her iesting at her new intertained Seruant, againe to Francesco, who after hee had made dispatch of his businesse, got him home to his lodging: where sitting solitary in his chamber, hee began to call to remembrance, the perfections of his new Mistrisse, the excellent proportion of

her

her phisnomy, her stature, voice, gesture, vertues (as he thought) ruminating vpon euery part with a plaudite. At last as he was in this pleasing suppose, he remembred his sweete Isabel, whose beauty and vertue was once so precious, that hee were his old loue, and his new fancy, he fell into these passions. Ah Francesco, whither art thou carried with new conceits? shall thy fruits be more subiect to the Northerne blasts, then thy blossomes? shall thy middle age be more full of folly, then thy tender yeeres? wilt thou loue in thy youth, and lust when thy daies are halfe spent? men say, that the Cedar, the elder it is, the straighter it growes; that Narcissus flowers, the higher they spring, the more glorious is their hew: and so should Gentlemen, as they exceed in yeeres, excell in vertues: but thou (Francesco) art like to the Halcions, which being hatcht white as milke, grow to be as blacke as Jeat: the young Storks haue a musicall voyce, but the old a fearefull sound. When thou wert of small age, men honoured thee for thy qualities, and now in yeeres, shall they hate thee for thy vices? But to what end tendes this large preamble to check thy fondnesse, that must leaue to loue, and learne to lust? What, leaue to loue Isabel, whose beautie is diuine, whose vertues rare, whose chastitie loyall, whose constancy vntainted? And for whom? for loue of some vnknowne Curtezan. Consider this, Francesco, Isabel for thy sake hath left her Parents, forsaken her friends, reiected the world, and was content rather to brooke poverty with thee, then possesse wealth with her Father. Is shee not faire to content thine eye, vertuous to allure thy minde? Nay, is she not thy wife, to whom thou art bound by law, loue, and conscience, and yet wilt thou start from her: what from Isabel? Didst thou not vow that the heauens should bee without lampes, the earth without beasts, the world without Elements, before Isabel should be forsaken of her Francesco? And wilt thou prooue as false as shee is faithfull? shall shee like Dido cry out against Æneas? like Phillis against Demephoon? like Ariadne against Theseus, and thou be Canonized in the Chronicles, for a man full of periurie? Oh consider Francesco whom thou shalt lose, if thou loosest Isabel, and what thou shalt gaine, if thou winnest Infida: the one being a louing wife, the other a flattering Curtizan. Hast thou read Aristotle, and findest thou

not

not in his Philosophy, this sentence set downe?

Omne animal irrationale ad sui similem diligendum naturâ dirigitur.

And wilt thou that art a creature endued with reason, as thou art excelling them in wisedome, exceede them in vanities? Hast thou turned ouer the liberal Sciences as a scholer, and amongst them all hast not found this generall principle, that vnity is the essence of amitie, & yet wilt thou make a diuision in the greatest simpathy of all loues? May Francesco, art thou a Christian, and hast tasted of the sweet fruits of Theology, and hast not read this in holy writ, pend downe by that miracle of wisedome Salomon, that he which is wise should reiect the strange woman, and not regard the sweetnesse of her flattery?

Desire not the beautie of a strange woman in thine heart, nor be not intrapped in her eye-lids:

For through a whorish woman, a man is brought to a morsel of bread, and a woman will hunt for the precious life of a man.

Can a man take fire in his bosome, and not be burnt? or can a man tread vpon coales, and not be scorched?

So he that goeth to his neighbours wife, shall not be innocent whosoeuer toucheth her.

Men doe not despise a theefe, when hee stealeth to satisfie his soule: but if he be found, he shall restore seuen-fold, or giue all the substance of his house.

But he that committeth adulterie with a woman, is destitute of vnderstanding; he that doth it, destroyeth his owne soule.

He shall finde a wound and dishonour, and his reproch shall neuer be put away.

If then, Francesco, Theologie tels thee such axioms, wilt thou striue against the streame, and with the Deere, feede against the winde? Wilt thou swallow vp sinne with greedinesse, that thou must bee punished without repentance? No, Francesco, home to the wife of thy youth, and drinke the pleasant waters of thine owne Well. And what of all these friuolous circumstances? Wilt thou measure euery action with Philosophy, or euery thought with diuinitie? Then shalt thou liue in the world, as a man hated in the world. What, Francesco, hee that is afraid of euery bush, shall neuer proone good huntsman; & he

that

that at euery gulf puts to the Lée, shall neuer be good Nauigator. Thou art now, Francesco, to be a Louer, not a Diuine, to measure thy affections by Ouids principles, not by rules of theologie, and time present wils thée to loue Infida, when thou canst not looke on Isabel, distance of place is a discharge of duty, and men haue their faults, as they are full of fancies. What, the blinde eates many a flie, and much water runnes by the Mill that the Miller neuer knowes of, the euill that the eye sees not, the hart rues not. *Caste si non caute.* Tush Francesco, Isabel hath not Lynceus eyes, to see so farre. Therefore while thou art resident in London, enioy the beauty of Infida, and when thou art at home, onely content thee with Isabel, so with a small fault shalt thou fully satisfie thine owne affections. Thus Francesco soothed himselfe, and did *In vtramuis aurem dormire*, caring little for his good, as long as hee might please his new Goddesse, and making no exception of a wife, so hee might bee accepted of his Paramour. To effect therefore the desired ende of his affects, he made himselfe as neate and quaint as might be, and hied him home to his new mistresses house, to put in practice that which himselfe had purposed: whither in the afternoone arriuing, he vnderstood by her Chamber-maids, that she was at home and solitary: by her therefore hee was conducted to Infidaes Closet, where he found her séeming melancholy, and thus awaked her from her dumps.

Faire Mistris, haile to your person, quiet to your thoughts, and content to your desires. At my first comming into your Chamber, séeing you sit so melancholy, I thought either Diana sate musing on the principles of her modestie, or Venus malecontent, dumping on her amours: for the shew of your vertues represents the one, and the excellence of your beautie discouers the other: but at last, when the glister of your beautie surpassing them both, reflected like the pride of Phœbus on my face, I perceiued it was my good Mistresse, that discontented sate in her dumps; wherefore, as your bounden seruant, if either my word or sword may free you from these passions, I am here ready in all actions howsoeuer preiudiciall, to shew the effect of my affection. Infida glad to see her Louer in this Labyrinth: wherein to binde him sure, she taking him by the hand, made

this wily answere.

Sweete seruant, how discontent soeuer I seeme, dismay not you: for your welcome is such as you can wish, or the sinceritie of my heart affoord. womens dumpes grow not euer of a preiudicial mis-hap, but oft-times of some superficial melancholy, inforced with a frowne, and shaken off with a smile: hauing sorrow in their faces, and pleasure in their heart: resembling the leaues of the Liquorice, that when they are most full of drawe without, are then most drie within. I tell you, seruant, women are wily cattell, and therefore haue I chosen so good a Heardsman as your selfe, that what our wantonnesse offends, your wisedome may amend. But trust me, Francesco, were I wronged by Fortune, or iniuried by any Foe, the promise of such a Champion were sufficient to arme me with disdain against both: but rest satisfied, your presence hath banished all passions, and therefore you may see, seruant, you are the Loadstone, by whose vertue my thoug'hts take all their direction. Being thus pleasant, shee set Francesco downe by her, and hand in hand interchanged amorous glances. But he that was afraid to discouer his minde, in that some sparks of honesty still remained in his heart, sate tormented with loue and feare, prickt forward by the one to discourse his desires, kept backe by the other from vttering his affections. Thus in a quandary he sate like one of Medusaes changelings, till Infida seeing him in this suddaine amaze, began thus to shake him out of his passions.

Now Segnior Francesco, I see the old adage is not alwaies true, *Consulenti nunquam caput doluit*: for you that erst alleaged perswasions of mirth, are now ouergrowne with melancholly. When an extreme stormе followes a pleasant calme, then the effects are metaphysicall, and where such a violent dumpe of cares is sequence to such an extasie of ioyes, either I must attribute it to some apoplexie of sences, or some strange alteration of passions. Francesco, the ouen damd vp, hath the greatest heate, fire suppressed, is most forcible, the streames stopt, either breake through or ouerflow, and sorrowes concealed, as they are most passionate, so they are most peremptorie. What Francesco spit on thy hand, and lay hold on thy heart: one pound of care paies not an ounce of debt: a friend to reueale, is a medicine to relieue:

relieue: discouer thy griefe, and if I be not able to redresse with wealth, although what I haue, is at thy command, yet I will attempt with counsaile, either to perswade thee from passions, or intreate thee to patience: say, Francesco, and feare not, for as I will be a friendly counseller so I will be a faithfull concealer.

Our young Gentleman hearing Infida apply such lenitiue plaisters to his cutting corrasiues, thought the patient had great hope, when the Phisition was so friendly; he therefore with a demure countenance beginning Louer-like his preamble, with a deepe sigh, courted her thus.

Faire Mistris (quoth he) if I faile in my speeches, this be it is, because I faint in my passions, being as timorous to offend, as I am amorous to attempt: when the obiect is offered to the sence, the sight is hindred, *Sensibile sensui oppositũ, nulla fit sensatio*: Mars could neuer play the Orator, when hee wrung Venus by the hands: nor Tully tell his tale, when his thoughts were in Terentiaes eyes: Louers are like to the Heban blossomes, that open with the dewe, and shut with the Sun; so they in presence of their mistresse haue their tongues tied, and their eyes open, pleading with the one, and being silent in the other, which one describeth thus:

Alter in alterius iactantes lumina vultus,
Quærebant taciti noster vbi esset amor.

Therefore sweet Infida, what my tongue vtters not, thinke conceited in my hart: and then thus: since first my good fortune, if thou fauouredst me, or my aduerse destinies, if I finde thee contrary, brought me to Troynouant, and that these ouer-daring eyes were entertained into those gorgeous obiects, know, that Cupid lying at aduantage, so snared me in thy perfections, that euer since euery sence hath rested imperfect. For when I marked thy face, more beauteous then Venus, I surueyed it with a sigh, and mine eye portraied it with a passion: when I noted thy vertues, then my minde rested captiue: when I heard thy wit, I did not onely wonder, but I was so wrapt in the Labyrinth of thine excellence, that no starre but Infida could be the guide whereby to direct my course. Sith then, faire Mistresse, you, and none but you, haue robbed me of my affections, harbour not in such a sweete body a hard heart, but doe me iustice, let me haue

loue for loue, leſt I complaine my deſtinies to be equiualent to my deſires, and think my fortunes to be sharper then my loues. Thinke, Infida, faults in affections are but slight follies: Venus hath shrines to shaddow her trewants, and Cupids wings are shelters, for such as venture too farre to content their thoughts. Sinnes vnſœne, are halfe pardoned, and Loue requires not chaſtitie, but that her Souldiers be charie. Then thinke (ſweet Infida) if thou grant my deſire, how carefull I will be of thy honor, rather ready to abide the preiudice of life, then to brooke the diſparagement of thy fame: In lieu therefore of my loyall ſeruice, grant me that ſweet gift, which as it begins in amitie, can no way take end but in death: otherwiſe I ſhal bee forced to accurſe my fortunes, accuſe my frowardneſſe, and expect no other hap, but a life full of miſeries, or a death full of martyrdoms. With this paſſion ending his plea he diſſolued into ſuch ſighes, that it diſcouered his inward affection, not to be leſſe then his outward proteſtation.

Infida noting the perplexitie of her Louer, conceited his griefe with great ioy: yet that ſhe might not be thought too forward, ſhee ſeemed thus froward: and though her thoughts were more then his deſires, and that her minde was no leſſe then his motion, yet pulling her hand from his, ſhe made this frowning reply.

What Franceſco, when the Tyger hunteth for his prey, doth he then hide his clawes? Is the Pyrit ſtone then moſt hot, when it looketh moſt cold? Are men ſo ſubtile, that when they ſeeme moſt holy, they are fartheſt from God? can they vnder the ſhadow of vertue, couer the ſubſtance of vanitie, and like Ianus be double-faced, to preſent both faith and flattery? I had thought (ſeruant) when I entertained thee for thy courteſie, I ſhould not haue had occaſion to ſhake thee off for thy baldneſſe, nor when I liked thee for thy affable ſimplicitie, I ſhould haue miſliked thee for thy ſecret ſubtilty: What, Franceſco, to deſire ſuch a grant as may, if thou wert wiſe, neither ſtand with thy honeſtie to intend, nor with my honour to effect. Tell me, Franceſco, hath either my countenance bin ſo curteous, that it might promiſe ſuch ſmall curioſity, or my looke ſo laſcinious, that thou mighteſt hope to finde me ſo lauiſh, or my actions ſo wauering, or my diſpoſition ſo full of vanity, that my honor might ſeeme ſone to be aſſaulted,

ted, and some sacked: If I haue (Francesco) bin faulty in these follies, then wil I seeke to amend, wherein thou saiest I haue made offence: if not, but that thou thinkest, for that I am a woman, I am easie to be won with promises of loue, and protestations of loyalty, thou art (sweet seruant) in a wrong bore, & sittest farre beside the cushion: for I passe of my honor more then life, and couet rather to haue the title of honesty, then the dignitie of a diademe: cease then, vnlesse thou wilt surcease to haue my fauor, & content thee with this, that Infida allowes of thee for loue, not for lust: and yet if she should tread her shoe awry, would rather yeeld the spoile of her honor to her seruant, then to the greatest prince of the world. Francesco, though he was a nouice in these affaires, and was nipped on the head with this sharpe repulse, yet he was not so to take the showre for the first storme, nor so ill a woodman, to giue ouer the chace at the first default, but that he prosecuted his purpose thus. I am sorrie (faire goddesse of my deuotion) if my presumption hath giuen any offence to my sweete mistresse, for rather then I should but procure a frowne in her forehead, I would haue a deepe wound in my owne heart; coueting rather to suppresse my passions with death, then to disparage my credite with so good a patronesse. Therfore though my destinies be extreme, my affections great, and my loues such as can take no ende but in your fauours, yet I rest vpon this, Infida hath commaunded me to cease, and I wil not dare so much as to prosecute my sute, although euery passion should be a purgatorie, and euery daies deniall a moneths punishment in hell: with that he set downe this period with such a sigh, that as the Mariners say, a man would haue thought al would haue split againe. This cunning Curtizan being afraid, with this checke to haue quatted the queasie stomacke of her louer, desirous to draw to her that with both hands, which she had thrust away with her little finger, began to be pleasant with Francesco thus.

What seruant, are you such a fresh water Souldier, that you faint at the first skirmish? feare not man, you haue not to deale with Mars, but with Venus; and her darts of deniall, as they pricke sharpe, so they pierce little, and thunderbolts do affright, not preiudice. Feare not man, a womans hart and her tongue, are not relatiues: tis not euer true, that what the heart thinketh,

eth, the tongue clacketh. Venus ſtormes are temp3ed with Roſe-water, and when ſhe hath the greateſt w3inckle in her b3ow, then hath ſhe the ſweeteſt dimple in her chinne: be blithe, man, a faint heart neuer won faire Lady. Franceſco hearing his Miſtreſſe thus pleaſant, took Op3tunitie by the fo3ehead, & dealt ſo with his Infida, that be fo3e he went, all was well, ſhe blusht not, no3 he baſht, but both made vp their market with a faire of kiſſes: which ſimpathy of affections, b3ed the poo3e Gentlemans o-uerth3ow; fo3 he was ſo ſnared in the wily trammels of her al-luring flatterie, that neither the remembrance of his Iſabel, the care of his childe, the fauo3s of his friends, o3 the feare of diſcre-dite, could in any wiſe hale him from that hell, whereunto, th3ough his owne folly, he was fallen.

Where, by the way (Gentlemen) let vs note the ſubtiltie of theſe Syrens, that with their falſe harmony perſwade, and then p3eiudice, who bewitch like Calypſo, and inchant like Circes, carrying a ſhew, as if they were Veſtals, and could with Amulia carry water in a ſiue, when they are flat Curtiſans, as far from honeſty, as they are from deuotion. At the firſt, they carrie a faire ſhew, reſembling Caliſto, who hid her vanities with Dia-naes baſſe, hauing in their looks a coy diſdain, but in their harts a hot deſire, denying with the tongue, and enticing with their lookes, reiecting in wo3ds, and alluring in geſtures: and ſuch a one (Gentlemen) was Infida, who ſo plied Franceſco with her flattering fawnes, that as the y3on followes the Adamant, the ſtraw the Ieat, and the Helitropian the beames of the Sunne, ſo his actions were directed after her eye, and what ſhe ſaid, ſtood fo3 a p3inciple, inſomuch, that he was not onely ready in all ſub-mis humo3s to pleaſe her fancies, but willing fo3 the leaſt wo3d of offence, to d3aw his weapon againſt the ſtoutеſt Champion in all Troynouant. Thus ſeated in her beautie, he liued a long while, fo3getting his retarne to Caerbranck, til on a day ſitting muſing with himſelfe, ſhe fell into a deepe conſideration of his fo3mer fo3tunes and preſent follies: whereupon taking his Lute in his hand, he ſung this Roundelay.

Franceſcoes

Franceſcoes Roundelay.

SItting and ſighing in my ſecret muſe,
As once *Apollo* did, ſurpriſde with loue,
Noting the ſlippery wayes young yeeres doe vſe,
What fond affects the prime of youth doth moue.
With bitter teares deſpairing I do cry,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

When wanton age, the bloſſomes of my time,
Drew me to gaze vpon the gorgeous ſight,
That beautie pompous in her higheſt prime,
Preſents to tangle men with ſweet delight,
Then with deſpairing teares my thoughts do cry,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

When I ſurueyde the riches of her lookes,
Whereout flew flames of neuer-quencht deſire,
Wherein lay baits that *Venus* frames with hookes,
Or where proud *Cupid* ſate all arm'd with fire:
Then toucht with loue my inward ſoule did crie,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

The milke-white *Galaxie* on her brow,
Where loue doth dance *lauoltas* of his skill,
Like to the Temple where true louers vow,
To follow what ſhall pleaſe their Miſtris will,
Noting her luory front: now doe I crie,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

Her face like ſiluer *Luna* in her ſhine,
All tainted through with bright vermilion ſtraines,
Like Lillies dipt in *Bacchus* choiceſt wine,
Powdred and interſeamd with azur'd vaines,
Delighting in their pride; now may I cry,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

The golden wires that checkers in the day,
Inferior to the treſſes of her haire,
Her Amber trammels did my heart diſmay,
That when I looke, I durſt not ouer-dare:
Proud of her, now am I forſt to cry,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

Theſe fading beauties drew me vnto ſin,
Natures great riches framde my bitter ruth,
Theſe were the traps that loue did ſnare me in,
Oh theſe, and none but theſe haue wrackt my youth,
Miſſe-led by them, I may deſpairing cry,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

By theſe I ſlipt from vertues holy tracke,
That leades vnto the higheſt Chriſtall Spheare,
By theſe I fell to vanity and wracke,
And as a man forlorne with ſin and feare:
Deſpaire and ſorrow doth conſtraine me cry,
Woe worth the faults and follies of mine eye.

Although this ſonnet was of his ready inuention, and that he vttered it in the bitterneſs of mind, yet after he had paſt ouer his melancholy, and from his ſolitary was fallen into company, he forgat his patheticall impreſſion of vertue, and like the dog, did *redire ad vomitum*, and fell to his owne vomite, reſembling thoſe Grecians, that with Vlyſſes drinking of Circes druggs, loſt both forme and memorie. Wel, his affaires were done, his horſe ſold, and no other buſineſſe now reſted to hinder him from hying home, but his Miſtriſſe, which was ſuch a violent detainer of his perſon, and thoughts, that there is no heauen, but Infidaes houſe, where although he pleaſantly entred in with delight, yet cowardly he ſlipt away with repentance. Well, leauing him to his new loues, at laſt to Iſabel, who daily expected the comming home of her beſt beloued Franceſco: thinking euery houre a yeare, till ſhe might ſee him, in whom reſted all her content. But when (poore ſoule) ſhe could neither feede her ſight with his preſence,

ſence, nor his eares with his letters, ſhe began to lowre, & grew ſo diſcontent, that ſhe fell into a feuer. Fortune that meant to try her patience, thought to proue her with theſe tragicall newes. It was told her by certaine Gentlemen her friends, who were her husbands priuate familiars, that he meant to ſojourne moſt part of the yeare in Troyenant: one blunt fellow amongſt the reſt that was plaine and without falſhood, told her the whole cauſe of his reſidence, how he was in loue with a moſt beautifull Gentlewoman called Infida, and that ſo deeply, that no perſwaſion might reuoke him from that alluring Curtizan. At this Iſabel made no account, but tooke it as a friuolous tale, and thought the worſe of ſuch as buzzed ſuch fantaſticall follies into her eares: but when the generall report of his demeanors was bruted abroad throughout all Caerbrancke, then with bluſhing cheekes, ſhe hid her face, & grieuing at his follies and her owne fortunes, ſmothered the flames of her ſorrowes with inward conceit, but outwardly withſtood ſuch inſatirical tearmes as did inueigh againſt the honeſty of Franceſco, ſo that ſhe wonne great commendations of all for her loyaltie and conſtancy: yet when ſhe was gotten ſecret by her ſelfe, her heart full of ſorrowfull paſſions, and her eyes full of teares, ſhee began to meditate with her ſelfe of the prime of her youth vowed to Franceſco, how ſhe forſooke Father, friends, and Country, to be a paramour vnto her harts paragon: The vowes he made, when he caried her away in the night, the ſolemne promiſes and proteſtations that were vttered. When ſhe had pondred all theſe things, then ſhe called to minde Æneas, Demophoon, and Theſeus, and matcht them with Dido, Phillis, and Ariadne, and at laſt, ſighed thus: And ſhall it bee ſo betweene Iſabel and Franceſco? No, thinke not ſo (fond woman) let not iealouſie blind thee, whom loue hath indued with ſuch piercing inſight: for as there is no content to the ſweetneſſe of loue, ſo there is no deſpaire to the preiudice of iealouſie: whereupon to ſhake off all fancies, ſhe tooke her Citterne in her hand, and ſung this verſe out of Arioſto.

Che piu felice è pui iucundo ſtato,
Che viuer pui do lce è pui beato,
Sarui deſeruire vno amoroſo cuore

Che d'esser in seruitud amore,
Se non fuisse huomo sempre stimulato,
Da quella rio timore, da quella frenezia,
Da quella rabbia, della ielozia.

Yet as women are constant, so are they easie to beléeue, especially truth: and so it fell out with Isabel, for shee (poore soule) could take no rest, her head was so troubled with these newes, hammering a thousand humors in her braine, how shee might know the certaintie of his follies, and how shee might reclaime him from his new entertaind affection. She considered with her selfe, that men allure Doues by the beautie of the house, and reclaime Hawkes by the fairenes of the lure, and that loue ioyned with vertue, were able to recall the most straggling Æneas to make sailes againe to Carthage. Tush (quoth shee to her selfe) suppose he be falne in loue with a Curtizan, & that beautie hath giuen him the braue: what, shall I vtterly condemne him? No: as he was not the first, so he shall not be the last. What, youth will haue his swinge, the briar will be full of prickles, the nettle will haue his sting, and youth his amours: men must loue, and will loue, though it be both against law and reason; a crooked syen will prooue a strait trée, the Juniper is sowre when it is a twig and swéete when it is a trée: time changeth manners, and Francesco, when hee entreth into the condition of a flattering Curtizan, wil forsake her, and returne penitent & more louing to his Isabel. Thus like a good wife she construed all to the best: yet she thought to put him in mind of his returne, and therefore she writ him a letter to this effect.

Isabel to Francesco, health.

IF Penelope longed for her Vlysses, thinke, Isabel wisheth for her Francesco, as loyall to thée, as shee was constant to the wilie Greeke, and no lesse desirous to sée thee in Caerbrancke, then shée to enioy his presence in Ithaca, watering my chéekes with as many teares, as she her face with plaints: yet my Francesco, hoping I haue no such cause as shée, to increase her cares:

for

for I haue such resolution in thy constancy, that no Circes with all her inchauntments, no Calypso with all her sorceries, no Syren with all her melodies could peruert thee from thinking on thine Isabel. I know, Francesco, so deeply hath the faithfull promise and loial vowes, made and interchanged between vs, taken place in thy thoughts, that no time how long soeuer, no distance of place, how saeuer different, may alter that impression. But why doe I inferre this needlesse insinuation to him, that no vanity can alienate from vertue: let me Francesco, perswade thee with other circumstances. First my sweet, thinke how thine Isabel lies alone, measuring the time with sighs, and thine absence with passions, counting the day dismal, and the night full of sorrowes, being euery way discontent, because she is not content with her Francesco. The onely comfort that I haue in thine absence is thy child, who lies on his mothers lure, and smiles as wantonly as his father when he was a wooer. But when the boy sayes, Mam, where is my Dad, when will he come home? Then the calme of my content, turneth to a present storme of plotting sorrow, that I am forced sometime to say: Vnkinde Francesco, that forgets his Isabel! I hope, Francesco, it is thine affaires, not my faults that procure this long delay. For if I know my follies did any way offend thee, to roll thus long absent, I would punish my selfe both with outward and inward penance. But howsoeuer, I pray for thy health, and thy speedy returne, and so Francesco fare well.

Thine more then her owne, *Isabel.*

SHe hauing finished her letters, conueied them speedily to Troynouant, where they were deliuered to Francesco, who receiuing them with a kinde, went into his study, and there vnript the Seales with a sigh, perceiuing by the contents, that Isabel had an inkling of his vnkinde Loues, which drawe him into a great quandary, that deepely entering into the insight of his lasciuious life, he began to feele a remorse in his conscience, how grieuously he had offended her, that had so faithfully loued him. Oh, quoth he, shall I be so ingrate as to quitt ance affection with fraude? So vnkinde as to weigh vertue loue with discourtesie? to giue her a woode that presents me a flower, and to beat her with net-

tles, that perfumes mée with Roses: consider with thy selfe Francesco, how déeply thou dost sin. First, thou offendest thy God in choosing so wanton a Goddesse; then thou dost wrong thy wife, in preferring an inconstant Curtizan before so faithfull a Paramour: yet Francesco, thy Haruest is in the grasse, thou mayst stop at the brim, because thou hast neuer touched the bottome. What? men may fall, but to wallow in wickednesse is a double fault. Therefore recall thy selfe, reclaime thy affections: Is not thine Isabel as faire? Oh if she be not, yet is she more dertuous. Is not Isabel so witty as Infida? Oh, but she is more constant: & then art thou so mad, to preferre drosse before gold, a common flint before a choice diamond, vice before vertue, fading beauty before the excellent inward qualities? No, shake off these follies, and say both in mouth and heart, None like Isabel. This he said by himselfe, but when he went forth of his Chamber, and espied his Mistris looking out at her window, all this géere changed, and the case was altered: she called, and in he must, and there in a feast scofft at his wiues letters, taking his Infida in his armes, and saying, I will not leaue this Troy for the chastest Penelope in the world.

Thus he soothed himselfe in the swéetnesse of his sin, resembling the Leopards that féed on Marioram while they die, or the people Hyperborei, that sit so long and gaze against the Sunne, till they become blind: so he doated on the perfection of Infida, til it grew to his vtter preiudice; for no reason could diuert him frō his damned intent, so had he drowned himselfe in the degrées of lust: insomuch that he counted it no sin to offend with so faire a Saint: alluding to the saying of the holy Father:

Consuetudo peccandi tollit sensum peccati.

Thus did these two continue in the Sympathy of these sins, while Isabel rested her at home, content in this, that at last hée would be reclaimed, and till then she would vse patience, séeing *Nunquam sera est ad bonos mores via.* Wallowing thus in the folds of their own follies, Fortune, that meant to experience the force of loue, dealt thus conceitedly. After these two Louers had by the space of thrée yeares securely slumbred in the swéetnes of their pleasures, and drunk with the surfet of content, thought no other heauen but their owne supposed happines: as euery storme

hath

hath his calme, and the greateſt Spring-tide the deadeſt ebbe, ſo fared it with Franceſco: for ſo long went the pot to the water, that at laſt it came broken home, and ſo long put he his hand into his purſe, that at laſt the empty bottome returned him a writ of *Non eſt inuentus*; for well might the Diuell daunce there, for euer a croſſe there was to kéepe him backe.

Well, this louer fuller of paſſions then of pence, began (when he entred into the conſideration of his owne eſtate) to mourne of the thine, and to hang the lip as one, that for want of ſounding had ſtroke himſelfe vpon the Sands: yet he couered his inward ſorrow with outward ſmiles, and like Ianus, preſented his Miſtris with a merry looke, when the other ſide of his viſage was full of ſorrowes. But ſhee that was as good as a touch-ſtone to trie mettals, could ſtrait ſpie by the Lafe where the ſhooe wringed him: and ſeeing her Franceſco was almoſt foundred, thought to ſée if a ſkilful Farriar might mend him: if not, like an vnthankfull Hackney-man, ſhe meant to turne him into the bare Leas, & ſet him as a tired Iade to picke a Sallet.

Vpon which determination, that ſhe might do nothing raſhly, ſhe made inquirie into his eſtate, what liuings hee had, what Lands to ſel, how they were, either tied by Statute, or intaild. At laſt, through her ſecret and ſubtile inquiſition, ſhe found that al his come was on the floze, that his ſhéep were clipt, & the wool ſold: to be ſhoꝛt, that what he had by his wife, could neither bee ſold noꝛ moꝛgaged, & what he had of his owne, was ſpent vpon her, that nothing was left foꝛ him to liue vpon but his wits. This newes was ſuch a cooling card to this Curtizã, that the extreme heate of her loue was already growne to be luke-warme: which Franceſco might eaſily perceiue: foꝛ at his arriuall, his welcome was moꝛe ſtrange, her lookes moꝛe coy, his fare moꝛe ſlender, her glances leſſe amoꝛous: and ſhe ſéemed to be Infida in pꝛopoꝛtion, but not in wonted paſſions.

This vncouth diſdaine made Franceſco maruel, who yet had not entred into her deceits, noꝛ (being ſimple of himſelfe) had euer yet experienſt a ſtrumpets ſubtilty: he imputed therfoꝛe his miſtreſſe coineſſe to the diſtemperature of her body, and thought that being not well, it was no wonder though ſhe gaue him the leſſe welcome.

Thus, poore Nouice, did he conster euery thing to the best, vntill time presented him with the truth of the worst: for in short time, his Hostes called for money, his creditors threatned him with an arrest, his cloathes wayt thread-bare, and there was no more coine in the mint to amend them. Where, vpon a day, sitting in a great dumpe by his Infida, who was as solemne as hee was sorrowfull, he burst forth into these speeches.

I haue read (sweet Loue) in the Aphorismes of Philosophers, that heate suppressed, is more violent, the streame stopt, makes the greater deluge, and passions concealed, procure the deeper sorrowes. Then if *Contrariorum contraria est ratio*, there is nothing better then a bosome-friend, with whom to conferre vpon the iniurie of Fortune. Finding my selfe (Infida) full of Pathemaes, as stung to the quick, inuenomed with the Tarantula of heart sicke torments, I think no medicine fitter for my malady, then to bee cured by the musicall harmony of thy friendly counsaile. Know then, Infida, that Troynouant is a place of great expence, like the serpent Hidaspis, that the more it sucks, the more it is athirst, eating men aliue as the Crocodile: and being a place of as dangerous allurement, as the seat where the Syrens sit and chaunt their preiudiciall melody. It is to young Gentlemen like the Labyrinth, whereout Theseus could not get without a thread, but here bee such monstrous Minotaures, as first deuoure the thread, & then the person. The Innes are like Hothouses, which by little and little sweat a man into a consumption: the Host he carries a pint of wine in the one hand, to welcome, but a poniard in the other to stab: and the Hostes she hath smiles in her fore-head, and prouides good meate for her guests, but the sauce is roskiy, for it farre exceeds the cates. If coyne want, then either to Limbo, or else clap vp a commoditie (if so much credit bee left) where he shall finde such knots, as hee will neuer be able, without his vtter preiudice, to vntie. Brokers, I leaue them off, as too course ware to be mouthed with an honest mans tongue. These Minotaures, faire Iafida, haue so eaten me vp in this Labyrinth, as to bee plaine with thee that art my second selfe, I want, and am so farre indebted to the Mercer and mine Hostes, as either thou must stand my friend to disburse so much money for me, or else I must depart from Troynouant, and

so

so from thy sight, which how prerious it is to me, I refer to thine owne conscience: or for an *Vltimum vale*, take vp my lodging in the Counter, which I know, as it would be vncouth to me, so it would bee greeuefull to thee, and therefore now hangs my welfare in thy will. How loth I was to vtter vnto thee my want and sorrow, measure by my loue, who with rather death, then thy discontent.

Infida could scarce suffer him so long a period, and therefore with her fore head full of furrowes, she made him this answer. And would you haue me (sir) buy an ounce of pleasure, with a tunne of mishaps, or reach after repentance with so high a rate? haue I lent thee the blossoms of my youth, & delighted thee with the prime of my yeeres? hast thou had the spoile of my virginitie, and now wouldest thou haue the sacke of my substance? when thou hast withered my person, aymest thou at my wealth? No sir, no, know, that for the loue of thee, I haue crackt my credit, that neuer before was stained. I cannot looke abroad without a blush, nor go with my neighbours without a frump, thou and thy name is euer cast in my dish, my foes laugh, and my friends sorrow to see my follies: wherefore seeing thou beginnest to picke a quarrel, and hereafter, when thine owne base Fortunes haue brought thee to beggery, wilt say, that Infida cost thee so many Crownes, and was thine ouerthrow: auant Mouice, home to thine own wife, who (poore Gentlewoman) sits and wants what thou consumest at Tauerns. Thou hast had my despoyle, and I feare I bears in my belly, the token of too much loue I owed thee: Yet content with this discredit, rather then to runne into further extremity, get thee out of my doores, for from henceforth thou shalt neuer bee welcome to Infida. And with that shee flung vp, and went into her Chamber. Francesco would haue made a reply, but shee would not heare him, nor hold him any more chat. Whereupon with a flea in his eare, he went to his lodging, there ruminating on the number of his follies, and the hardnes of his fortunes, seeing his score great, his coine little, his credite lesse: weighing how hardly he had vsed his Isabel: at last, leaning his head on his hand, with teares in his eyes, he began to be thus extremely passionate. Now Francesco, *Piscator ictus sapit*, experience is a true Philtrisse, but shee maketh her scholers

tread

tread vpon thornes, hast thou not leaped into the ditch, which thou hast so greedily desired to reach? Oh now thou feelst the difference betweene loue and lust: the one full of contented pleasure, the other of pleasing miseries: thy thoughts were feathered with fancy, & whither did they flie? so far, that they fred themselues, and thou rest consumed. Oh, Francesco, what are women? If they be honest, Saints, the purity of nature, the excellence of vertue, the perfection of earthly content. But if they be Curtizans and Strumpets, Oh, let me breathe before I can vtter the depth of such a monstrous description: they be in shape Angels, but in qualities deuils, painted Sepulchers with rotten bones, their foreheads are Kalenders of misfortunes, their eyes like comets, that when they sparkle, foretell some fatall disparagement, they allure with amorous glances of lust, and kil with bitter lookes of hate, they haue dimples in their cheekes to deceiue, & wrinckles in their browes to betray, their lips are like to the hony-combs, but who tasteth the drops, is impoysoned: they are as cleere as Christall, but bruse them, and they are as infectious as the Diamond, their teares are like the Aconiton that the Hydra wept: they present as Deianira, shirts for presents, but whoso puts them on, consumes like Hercules; they lay out the folds of their haire, and intangle men in their tresses, playing the horse-leach, that sucketh while they burst, betweene their brests is the vale of destruction, and in their beds, oh there is sorrow, repentance, hell and despaire. They consume man aliue, and aime at his substance, not his perfection, like Eagles, that onely flie thither where the carion is; they leade men to hell, and leaue them at the gates. To be briefe, they are ingratefull, periured, vntrue, inconstant, fleeting, ful of fraud, deceitfull, & to conclude in one word, they be the very refuse of natures excrements. Oh Francesco, what a satyrical inuectiue hast thou vttered? I may best (quoth hee) for I haue bought euery principle with a pound. What now rests for thee poore infortunate man? Thou hast yet left a meanes to end all these miseries, and that is this: draw thy rapier, and so die, that with a manly resolution thou mayst preuent thy further misfortunes. Oh, although thou hast sinned, yet despaire not, though thou art Anathema, yet proone not an Atheist: the mercy of God is aboue all his

woꝛks, and repentance is a pꝛecious balme. Home to thy wife, to the wife of thy youth, Franceſco, to Iſabel, who with her patience will couer all thy follies: remember this man, *Nunquam ſera eſt ad bonos mores via.*

Thus he ended, and with very griefe fel in a ſlumber. At this the Palmer bꝛeathed and made a ſtop, e a longer period. His hoſt deſirous to heare out the ende of Franceſcoes foꝛtunes, wiſhed him to goe foꝛward in his diſcourſe. Pardon me, ſir, quoth the Palmer, the night is late, and I haue trauelled all the day: my belly is full, and my bones would be at reſt: Therefoꝛe, foꝛ this time, let thus much ſuffice, e to moꝛrow at our vp-riſing, which ſhal be with the Sun. I will not only diſcourſe vnto you the end of Franceſcoes amours, of his returne home to his wife, and his repentance, but manifeſt vnto you the reaſon why I aimed my pilgrimage to Venice. The Gentleman and his wife very loth to be tedious to the good Palmer, were content with his pꝛomiſe: and ſo, taking vp the candle, lighted him to bed, whers we leaue him. And therefoꝛe, as ſoone as it may be, (Gentlemen)

looke foꝛ Franceſcoes further Foꝛtunes, and after that, my Farewell to Follies: and then, adue to amoꝛous Pamphlets.

FINIS.

The second part of Greenes *Neuer too late.*

Nunquam ſera eſt ad bonos mores via.

NO ſooner did Phœbus burniſh the heauen with his brightnes, & deckt in a glorious diademe of Chriſolites, had mounted him on his coach to lighten the Lampe that maketh Flora beauteous, but the Palmer was vp, and at his Orizons, being as deuout in his thoughts, as he was mindfull of his trauels: walking in the garden all alone, & ſeeing the Sun now péeping out of the Eaſt, he began to meditate with himſelf of the ſtate of man cõparing his life to the length of a ſpan, or the compaſſe of the Sun, who riſing bright & orient, cõtinueth but his appointed courſe, & that oft-times ſhadowed with ſo many clouds, and ſtained with a ſable veile of ſuch thick fogs, that he is more darkned with ſtorme, thẽ beautified with light: & if it fortune his ſhine is without blemiſh, yet he ſetteth, & that more oft in a folde of cloudes, then in a cléere ſkie: ſo man borne in the pride of beauty or pomp of wealth, be his honors equal with his fortunes, and he as happie as Auguſtus, yet his life hath but his limits, and that clogged with ſo many cares and croſſes, that his daies are more ful of miſeries, then of pleaſures; and his diſaſter miſhaps, are more then his proſperous fortunes: but if the ſtars grace him with al fauorable aſpects, and that he liue ful of content, in many honors and much wealth, yet his prime hath his autumne, his faire bloſſomes turne to tawny leaues, age will ſhake him by the ſhoulder, and nature will haue his due, that at laſt hée muſt ſet with the Sun, and perhaps in ſuch a cloud of ſinne, as his riſing may be in a ſtorme of ſorrowes. Thus did the Palmer meditate with himſelfe, being penitent for the follies of his youth, that at laſt thinking to be as muſicall to himſelfe, as the birds were melodious; he chanted out this Ode.

The penitent Palmers Ode.

WHilome in the winters rage,
A Palmer old and full of age,
Sate and thought vpon his youth,
With eyes teares, and hearts ruth,
Being all with cares y'blent,
When he thought on yeares miſ-ſpent,
When his follies came to minde,
How fond loue had made him blinde,
And wrapt him in a field of woes,
Shadowed with pleaſures ſhowes,
Then he ſighed, and ſaid, Alaſſe,
Man is ſinne, and fleſh is graſſe.
I thought my Miſtris haires were gold,
And in her locks my heart I fold:
Her amber treſſes were the ſight,
That wrapped me in vaine delight:
Her Iuory front, her pretty chin,
Were ſtales that drew me on to ſin:
Her ſtarry lookes, her chriſtall eyes,
Brighter then the Sunnes ariſe:
Sparkling pleaſing flames of fire,
Yoke my thoughts and my deſire,
That I gan cry ere I blin,
Oh, her eyes are paths to ſin.
Her face was faire, her breath was ſweet,
All her lookes for loue were meete:
But loue is folly: this I know,
And beautie fadeth like to ſnow.
Oh why ſhould man delight in pride,
Whoſe bloſſome like a dew doth glide?
When theſe ſuppoſes toucht my thought,
That world was vaine, and beauty nought,
I gan to ſigh, and ſay, Alaſſe,
Man is ſinne, and fleſh is graſſe.

The Palmer hauing ended his Ode, ſate in a great dumpe in the garden, when his Hoſt accompanied with his wife, deſirous

to heare out Francescoes fortune, were come into the place, and gaue him the bon iorno thus: Curteous Palmer, a kind salute to waken you from your mornings meditation: I see you kéepe the Prouerbe for a principle, To bed with the Bée, and vp with the Larke: no soner the Sun is in the skie, but you are at your orisons, either ruminating passions, or penance: either some old remembrance, or some new reuerse. Howsoeuer (gentle Palmer) tis no manners to enter too farre into your thoughts, and therefore leauing your secrets to your selfe, *Come stata la vostra signioria a quest amatina.* The Palmer that had learned a little broken Italian, seeing his honest Host in such a merris moode, made this answere: *Io sto bon signior diu merce, ringratiandoui sonamenti di vostra grande cortesia*, holding it fit for my Fortunes to haue many cares, and little sleepe, that my penance may bee great, sith my sins are many: long slúbers are for idle persons, not for penitent Palmers, and swéet dreames are no instances of hartie deuotion: therefore do I watch with the mouse, to argue my selfe miserable, and inioyne my self to much paines, because I am combred with many passions.

This morning entring into this Garden, I saw by the works of nature, the course of the world: for when I saw Floraes glorie shut vp in the foldes of Iris frownes, I began to consider, that the pride of man, was like the pomp of a flower, that to day glories in the field, and to morrow in the fornace: that we bée like the flies Hemeræ, that take life with the sunne, and die with the dew: that our honors are compared to the blossomes of a Cedar, which vanish ere they begin to burnish, & all our triumphs, like characters written in snow, that printed in a vapour, at the least Sun-shine discouer our vanity, for they are as soone melted, as our pleasures are momentarie. Tied by fates to this tickle state, we haue nothing more certaine then to die, nor nothing more vncertaine, then the houre of death: and therefore when I call to mind the follies of my youth, how they haue bén tickled with vice, I count in the flower of my yeares, to repent and amend: for

Nunquam sera est ad bonos mores via.

You doe well sir (quoth the Gentleman) in all your actions to consider the end: for he that fore-repents, forelées many perils,

rils: had I wist is a great fault, and after-wits are bitten with many sorrowes: therefore, such as grieue at their follies, & couet to preuent dangerous fortunes, they which take an antidote of grace against the deadly aconiton of sinne, and with present remorse preuent ensuing vanities, such indeede, as they liue well, shall die blessed. But leauing this humor till another time, you may see by our early rising, how my wife and I were delighted with your euenings parlee: for trust me, sir, desire of Francescoes further fortunes, made vs thus watchful, and therelaze seeing the morning is gray, and our longing great, and yet a good while to breakfast, if your leisure may afford so much, I pray you sit downe, and tel vs what was the end of his loues, and the effects of his repentance. The Palmer very willing to pleasure his courteous host, sate him downe in an Arbour, and began thus.

The Palmers Tale of Francesco.

As soone as Francesco awakt from his slumber, & began to enter further into the consideratiõ of Infidaes cousenage, his heart throbd at his follies, and a present passion of his great misfortunes so pained him, that all perplexed, hee began againe to sing his former song, & to say, that womens thoughts were like to the leaues of a Date tree, that change colors with the wind in a moment, figuring out sorrow with teares, and in that instant deseiphering pleasure with smiles: neither too resolute with the Stoicks, to yeeld to no passions, nor too absolute with the Essenі, to surfet with ouermuch chastity: their desires (quoth he) resemble Æolus forehead, that next euery storme containes a calme: their deeds are Almanackes, that descipher nothing but uncertaintie: either too scrupulous with Daphne to contemne al, or too voluptuous with Venus to desire all: and straight, neither flesh nor fish as the Porpoise, but time-pleasers, to content thẽselues with varietie of fancies. In this humorous melancholy he rose vp, & ranged about the city, despairing of his estate as a man penilesse, and therfore impatient, because he knew not how to redresse his miseries: to rely vpon the helpe of a Curtizan, he saw by experience, was to hang hope in the ayre: to stand vpon the fauour of friends, that was bootlesse: for he had few in the Citty, as being but a stranger there, & such as he had, were won with an Apple;

trencher-friends, & therefore to be left with the puffe of the least blaſt of aduerſities. To go home to his wife to faire Iſabel, that was as hard a cenſure as the ſentence of death: for ſhame of his follies made him aſhamed to ſhew his face to a womā of ſo high deſerts. In this perplexitie he paſſed ouer three or foure daies, til his purſe was cleane empty, his ſtore great, & his hoſteſſe would truſt him for no more money, but threatned him, if preſent payment were not made, to lay him in priſon. This newes was hard to Franceſco, that knew not how to auoid the preiudice, only his refuge was to preuent ſuch a miſfortune, to carry his apparell to the brokers, & with great loſſe to make money to pay for his diet: which once diſcharged, he walkt vp & downe as a man forlorne, hauing neither coine nor credit. Neceſſity that ſtingeth vnto the quick, made him ſet his wits on the tenter, & to ſtretch his braines as high as Elia, to ſee how hee could recouer pence to defray his charges by any ſiniſter meanes, to ſaue his ſorrowes: the care of his parents and of his owne honour, perſwading him from making gaine by labor: he had neuer bin brought vp to any mechanicall courſe of life. Thus euery way deſtitute of meanes to liue, he ſighed out this old ſaid ſaw, *Miſerrimum eſt fuiſſe beatum*: yet at laſt, as extremities ſearch very far, he called to mind that hee was a ſcholler, and that although in theſe daies art wanted honor, & learning lackt his due, yet good letters were not brought to ſo low an ebbe, but that there might ſome profit ariſe by them to procure his maintenance. In this humor he fell in amongſt a company of Players, who perſwaded him to try his wit, in writing of Comedies, Tragedies, or Paſtorals: and if he could performe any thing worth the ſtage, thē they would largely reward him for his paines. Franceſco glad of this motion, ſeeing a meanes to mitigate the extremity of his want, thought it no diſhonor to make gaine of his wit, or to get profit by his pen: and therefore getting him home to his chamber, writ a Comedy, which ſo generally pleaſed all the audience, that happy were thoſe Actors in ſhort time, that could get any of his workes, he grew ſo exquiſite in that faculty. By this meane his want was relieued, his credit in his hoſts hāde recouered, his apparell in greater brauerie then it was, and his purſe well lined with crowns.

At this diſcourſe of Franceſco, the Gentleman tooke his gueſt

by

by the hand, and broke off his tale thus. Now gentle Palmer, séeing we are fallen by course of prattle to parlée of plaies, if without offence, doe me that fauour to shew me your iudgement of playes, play-makers, & players. Although (quoth the Palmer) that some for being too lauish against that faculty, haue for their satyrical inuectiues bin wel canuased: yet seing here is none but our selues, & that I hope what you heare shall be trodden vnder foote, I will flatly say what I can, both euen by reading and experience. The inuention of Comedies were first found amongst the Greeks, and practised at Athens: some thinke by Menander, whom Terence so highly commends in his Heauton-timorure-non. The reason was, that vnder the couert of such pleasant, & Comicall euents, they aimed at the ouerthrow of many vanities that then reigned in the citie: for therein they painted out in the persons the course of the world, how either it was graced with honor, or discredited with vices: there might you sée leueld out the vaine life that boasting Thrasos vse, smoothed vp with the selfe-conceit of their owne excellence; the miserable estate of couetous parents, ý rather let their sons taste of any misfortunes, then to reléeue them with the superfluity of their wealth: the portraiture of parasitical friends, which sooth yong Gentlemen subtilly in their follies, as long as they may: *Ex eorum sullo viuere*, was set out in liuely colours. In those Comedies, the abuse of Bawds that made sale of honest virgins, and liued by the spoyle of women's honors, was déepely discouered; to be short, Lechery, Couetousnes, pride, self-loue, disobedience of Parents, and such vices predominant both in age and youth were shot at, not only with examples & instances to féede the eye, but with golden sentences of morall works, to please the eare. Thus did Menander win honor in Greece with his works, and reclaime both old and yong frō their vanities, by the pleasant effects of his Comedies. After him this faculty grew to be famous in Rome, practised by Plautus, Terence, and other that excelled in this qualitie, all aiming as Menander did, in all their works to suppresse vice & aduance vertue. Now so highly were Comedies estéemed in those daies, that men of great honor & graue account were the Actors, the Senate & the Consuls continually present, as auditors at all such sports, rewarding the Author with rich rewards, according

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to the excellencie of the Comedie. Thus continued this facultie famous, til couetousnes crept into the qualitie, and that meane men greedy of gaines, did fal to practise the acting of such plaies, and in the Theatre presented their Comedies but to such onely as rewarded them well for their paines; when thus Comedians grew to be mercenaries, then men of account left to practise such pastimes, and disdained to haue their honors blemisht with the staine of such base and vile gaines: insomuch that both comedies and Tragedies grew to lesse account in Rome, in that the free sight of such sports was taken away by couetous desires: yet the people (who are delighted with such nouelties & pastimes) made great resort, paid largely, & highly applauded their doings, insomuch, that the Actors by continuall vse, grew not onely excellent, but rich and insolent. Amongst whom in the daies of Tully, one Roscius grew to be of such exquisite perfection in the faculty, that he offered to contend with the Orators of that time in gesture, as they did in eloquence, boasting that he could expresse a passion in as many sundry actions, as Tully could discourse it in variety of phrases: yea so proud he grew by the daily applause of people, that he looked for honor and reuerence to be done him in the streets: which selfe conceit when Tully entred into with a piercing insight, he quipt at in this manner.

It chanced that Roscius and he met at dinner, both guests vnto Archias the Poet, where the proud Comedian dared to make comparison with Tully: which insolence made the learned Orator to grow into these termes: why Roscius, art thou proud with Æsops Crow, being prankt with the glory of others feathers: of thy selfe thou canst say nothing, & if the Cobler hath taught thee to say, Aue Cæsar, disdain not thy tutor, because thou prattest in a kings chamber: what sentence thou vttereſt on the stage, flowes from the censure of our wits, and what sentence or conceit of thy inuention the people applaud for excellent, that comes from the secrets of our knowledge. I grant your action, though it be a kind of mechanicall labour; yet well done, tis worthy of praise: but you worthlesse, if for so small a toy you waxe proud. At this Roscius waxt red, and bewrayed his imperfection with silence: but this checke of Tully, could not keepe others from the blemish of that fault, for it grew to a generall vice among the Actors, to

excell

excel in pride, as they exceéded in excellencie, & to braue it in the streets, as they brag it on the stage: so that they reueld it in Rome in such costly roabes, that they séemed rather mē of great patrimony, then such as liued by the fauor of the people. Which Publius Serulius very well noted, for he being the sonne of a Senator, and a man very baliant, met on a day with a Player in the streets richly apparelled, who so farre forgate himselfe, that hee tooke the wall of the young noble man; which Serulius taking in disdaine, countercheckt with this frump: my friend (quoth he) be not so brag of thy silken roabes, for I saw them but yesterday make a great shew in a brokers shop. At this the one was ashamed, and the other smild, and they which heard the quip, laught at the folly of the one, and the wit of the other. Thus sir haue you heard my opinion briefly of plaies, that Menander deuised them for the suppressing of banities, necessary in a common wealth, as long as they are vsed in their right kind: the playmakers worthy of honour for their Art: and players, men deseruing both praise and profit, as long as they war neither couetous, nor insolent. I haue caused you sir (quoth the gentlemā) to make a large digression, but you haue resolued me in a matter that I long doubted of, and therfore I pray you, again to Francesco. Why then thus, quoth the Palmer, after he grew excellent for making of Comedies, he wart not onely braue, but full of Crownes: which Infida hearing of, & hauing intelligence what course of life he did take, thought to cast forth her lure to reclaime him, though by her vnkindnes he was prooued haggard: for shée thought that Francesco was such a tame fole, that he would be brought to strike at any stale: decking her selfe therfore as gorgiously as she could, painting her face with the choice of all her drugs, she walked abroad where she thought Francesco vsed to take the aire: Loue & Fortune ioyning in league, so fauored her, that according to her desire she met him. At which incounter, I gesse, more for shame thé loue, she blusht: and fild her countenance with such repentant remorse (yet hauing her lokes full of amorous glaunces) that shée séemed like Venus, reconciling her selfe to froward Mars. The sight of Infida was pleasing in the sight of Francesco, and almost as deadly as the Basiliske: that had he not had about him Moly as Vlysses, hée had been inchanted by the charmes of that wily

Circes: but the abuse so stuck in his stomach, that she had prosecd him in his extremitie, that he returned all her glaunces with a frowne, and so parted. Infida was not amazed with his angrie moode, as one that thought loues fornace of force to heat the coldest Amatist, & the swéet words of a woman, as able to draw on desire, as the Syrens melody the passengers. What (quoth she) though for a while he be cholerick, Beauty is able to quench the flame, as it sets harts on fire: as Helens faults angred Paris, so her fauours pleased Paris: though she were false to Menelaus, yet her faire made him brook her follies: Women are priuiledged to haue their words & their wils, & whom they kil with a frowne, they cã reuiue with a smile. Tush, Francesco is not froward, but he may be wonne, he is no Saturnist to beare anger long, hee is soone hot, and soone cold, cholerick and kind harted: who though he be scolded away with bitter wordes, hee will be reclaimed againe with swéet kisses: a womans teares are Adamant, & men are no harder then Iron, and therefore may be drawne to pittie their passions. I wil faine, flatter, and what not, to get again my Frãcesco: for his purse is ful, & my coffers war empty. In this humor, taking pen & paper, she wrote a letter to him to this effect.

Infida to *Francesco* what he wants in health or wealth.

IF my outward penance (Francesco) could discouer my inward passions, my sighs bewray my sorrowes, or my countenance my miseries, then should I loke the most desolate of all, as I am most distrest of all, and the furrows in my face be numberles, as the griefes of my hart are matchlesse. But as the feathers of the Halciones glister most against the sorest storme, & Nylus is most calme against a deluge, so the sorrowes of my mind are so great, that they smother inwardly, though they make no outward appearance of mis hap. All these miseries Francesco grow frõ the cõsideration of mine own discourtesie, for whẽ I think of thy constancy, thy faith, thy feature, & thy beauty: and weigh with my selfe how al these bowed vnto Infida, they were lost by the disloialty of Infida, I call it in question, whether I had better despaire and die, or in hope of thy fauour, linger out my life. Penance of frée will, merits pardons of course, and griefs that grow from re-

morse,

more, deserue to be saluted with ruth: I cõfesse, Francesco, that I wronged thée, & therfore I am wrung at the hart: but so doth the Idæa of thy perfection, and the excellence of thy vertues frame a restlesse passion in my heart, that although thou shouldst vow to loath me, I cannot cease to loue thée. Oh, consider, women haue their faults, & act that in an houre, they repent al their life after. Though Mars & Venus brabbled, they were frieds after brawls, for a Louers iarre ought not to be a perpetual discord, but like a sun-shine showre, that be it neuer so sharp, is accoũted no storm: forgiue & forget Francesco then hartily, that I repent so deepely: grace thy Infida againe with one smile, ease her impatient passions with thy swéet presence: & assure thy self, she wil satisfie with loue, what she hath offended with folly. Bones that are broke, & after set againe, are the more stronger: Where the Béech trée is cut, there it growes most hard: reconciled friendship is the swéetest amitie. Then be friends with thy Infida: looke on her, & but visit her: and if she win not thy loue with her words, & shew her selfe so penitent that thou shalt pardon, then let her perish in her owne misfortunes, and die for want of thy fauour. Farewell.

Thine euer despairing Infida.

THis letter she sealed vp, & sent it by a secret friend to Francesco, who at the first, knowing from whence it came, would scarcely receiue it: yet at last, willing to heare what humor had made the Curtizan write vnto him, he broke ope the seales, and read the former contents: which when he had throughly perused, he found himselfe perplexed: for the cunning of her flattery made the poore man passionate, insomuch that sitting downe with the letter in his hand, he began thus to meditate with himself: Why doost thou vouchsafe, Francesco, to looke on her letters that is so lewd, to view her lines that are powdred with flattery, to heare her charmes that sékes thy preiudice, to listen to such a Calipso that aimes only at thy substance, not at thy person?

While thou wert poore, her forehead was ful of frownes, & in her looks sat the storms of disdain: but whẽ she sées thou hast feathered thy nest, and hast crowns in thy purse, she would play the Horse-leach to suck away thy wealth: and now would she be thy harts gold, while she left thée not one dram of gold. Oh Francesco,

so, she hides her clawes, but looks for her prey with the Tyger, she weepes with the Crocodile, and smiles with the Hiena, and flatters with the Panther, and vnder the couert of a fugred bait, shrowdes the intent of thy bane. Knowest thou not, that as the Marble drops against raine, so their teares fore-point mischiefe? that the fauors of a Curtizan are like the songs of the Grashopper, that euer foretell some fatall disparagement?

Beware then Francesco. (*Piscator ictus fapit*) she hath once burnt thée, feare fire with the child: she hath crost thée with disdaine, couet not with desire: hate her; for in lothing such a one, thou louest thy God. Returne not with ỳ dog to thy vomit, wallow not with swine in the mire, forsée not the best, and follow the worst. And yet Francesco, trust me, she is faire, beautifull, and wise: I but with that a Curtizan: perhaps shée wil now loue thée faithfully: if shee do, fond man, is not her hartie liking hatefull lust? dangerous to the body, and damnation to the soule. Tis a saying not so common as true, that hee which looketh continually against the Sun, shall at last bee blind, that whoso handleth pitch, must néeds be defiled: the trée that abideth many blasts, at last falleth by the Carpenters axe: the bird that striketh at euery stale, cannot long escape the snare: so long goeth the pitcher to the brooke, that at last it comes broken home: & he that securely swimmeth in sinne, shall surely be drowned in iniquity, whoso bindeth two sinnes together, shall neuer be reuenged in the one, and hee that delighteth to offend in youth, shal no doubt féele the punishmẽt. *Quod differtur, non aufertur.* Though God for a time suffer a man to wallow in his own wickednesse, & to say vnto his soule, Tush, the Lord regardeth not the way of sinners, nor suspecteth the misdéeds of men, he is slow to wrath, & prone to pittie: yet the Lord at last loketh down from heauen, and reuengeth al his grieuous sins with a heauie plague, yea hée roteth him out from the face of the earth, and his place is no more seene. Consider then, Francesco, if the Lord suffer thée in thine iniquity, and deferre present punishment, it is because thy mercy may séeme the more, & thy sin the greater. Hée that hath the dropsie, drinketh while he bursteth, and yet not satisfied: the Horse leach hath two daughters that neuer cry, Enough: whoso is stung with the serpent Dipsas, burneth, but can neuer be cooled, & whoso is inflamed with sin, thirsteth

thirsteth continually after wickednesse, vntill he hath supped the dregs of Gods displeasure, to his owne destruction. Beware by this, fall not into the trap, when thou seest the traine: for knowing the sinne, if thou offendest against thy owne conscience, the Lord will send vpon thee, cursing, trouble, and shame in all thou settest thy hand vnto, and will not cease to revenge, vntill thou perish from off the face of the earth. Oh, hast thou not at home an Isabel, that is the wife of thy youth, and the only friend of thy bosome indued with such exquisite beauty, & exceeding vertue, that it is hard to iudge, whether the pure complexion of her body, or the perfect constitutiõ of her mind holds the supremacy? And is not a peaceable woman, and of a good heart, the gift of the Lord? There is nothing so much worth, as a woman well instructed: a shamefast and faithful woman is a double grace: and there is no treasure to bee compared to her continent mind: but as the glistering beames of the Sun when it riseth, decketh the heauen: so the beautie of a good wife adorneth the house: & as goldẽ pillars do shine vpon the sockets of siluer, so doth a faire face in a vertuous mind. Shal the feare of God then, Francesco, be so far from thine eyes, as to leaue thy own wife, and imbrace a Curtizan, to leaue the law of God, and suffer thy hart to be subverted by lust? The Lion so abhorreth this crime, as he killeth the Lyonesse, for committing this fact. The Storke neuer meddleth but with his mate. The Iacinth stone wil not be worne on the finger of an adulterer: nor the Olive grow, if planted by one that leadeth his life in vnlawfull lusts: and wilt then shew thy selfe more careles in this crime then brute beasts? more retchlesse then vnreasonable creatures? more senceless then stones? yea, far lesse in vertue then a man? and far more in vice then a beast? Then will the Lord loke downe from heauen, and plague thée with a heauy curse. At this clause standing a great while in a maze, at the last hée stept to his Standish, and wrote this answer.

Francesco wisheth to Infida, remorse of conscience, and regard of honesty.

I Haue read thy letters, Infida, wherein I hoped to haue found more honesty and lesse vanity, a signe of better thoughts, and lines of more remorse: else had I left them sealed, as I couet to leaue thée vnséen. But I perceiue, as no time wil alter the Pan-

ther from his spots, the mouse from her feare, nor the tigre from his fiercenes: so neither date nor reason will change the conditions of a Curtizan. Thou writest thou hast not liberty enough to sin, enioyned by some euerthwart neighbour to bee more honest then thou wouldest be; which is as great penance to one of thy trade, as a long pilgrimage to a sorrowfull Palmer. A teare in a strumpets eie, is like heat-drops in a bright sunshine: as much to be pitied, as the Crocodile whē she weeps: a Curtizans laughter is like to lightning, that beautifies the heauen with a blaze, but forerunns stormes and thunder. Art thou in loue with Francesco? mary gep Giglet, thy loue sits on thy toungs end, ready to leape off as sone as thy mouth opens, and thine honestly hangs at thine eye, which fals away with euery winke: thou art inueigled with my beauty, that is, because thou heakest I haue a rich purse, not a faire face: for thou valuest as much of beauty without pence, as a horse of a faire stable without prouender. Thou art entised by my vertues: I wonder how that word vertue comes in thy mouth, when it is so farre from thy hart; and yet no maruell, for the most infectious serpents haue sweetest breaths, & commonnest Curtizans, the most curteous speeches.

Thou wouldest haue me grace thee with my presence, and renue our old friendship: so I will, when I meane to giue my body to the Chirurgion, and my soule to the diuel; for in louing thē, I must nēds grant this Legacy. Thy reason is, that bones once brokē, united againe, are the strongest: I would thy necke might make the experience, and then I would trust the instance. But why pester I so much paper to so lewd a person? as I found thee at the first, I leaue thee at the last, euen empty gorg'd, to bait at a full purse, incontinent, false, periured, as far from God, as thou art friend to the diuell. And so adue.

Francesco penitent, and therefore a persecutor to Curtizans.

After he had writtē this letter, he sent it to Infida, who reading it, and seeing she could get no fauour at the hands of Francesco. that wrought she neuer so subtilly, yet her trains were discouered, that her painted lures could not make him stope, so had he with reasō refelled his former folly: whē she perceiued, I say, that all her sweet potions were found to be poisons, though she

she covered them never so clarkly: she fel not in despaire, with ouermuch loue, but swore in her self to intend him some secret preiudice, if ever it lay in her by any meanes to procure it: but leauing her to the iustice of him that poiseth the deeds of such impenitent persons in his ballance, and committing Francesco to the making of some strange Comedy, I wil shew you how Fortune made an assault to the vnfained affection of faire Isabel.

The discourse of Isabels Fortunes.

ISabel living thus pensiue, in that shee wanted the presence of Francesco, yet for her patience and vertue, grew so famous, that all Caerbrancke talked of her perfections: her beautie was admired of every eye, her qualities applauded in every mans eare, that she was esteemed for a patterne of vertuous excellence throughout the whole Citty. Among the rest that censured of her curious fauours, there was one Signior Bernardo, a Burgomaster of the Citty, who chancing on a time to passe by the doore where Isabel soiourned, seeing so sweet a Saint, began to fall enamoured of so faire an obiect: and although he was old, yet the fire of lust crept into his eyes, and so inflamed his heart, as with a disordinate desire he began to affect her: but the renowm of her chastity was such, ỳ it almost quatted those sparks that heated him on to such lawlesse affectiõ. But yet when he cald to mind, that want was a great stumbling blocke, and saw the necessitie that Isabel was in, by the absence of Francesco, he thought gold would be a ready meanes to gaine a womans good wil, & therefore despaired not of obtaining his purpose. After that this Signior Bernardo had obserued the exquisite perfection of her body, & how she was adorned with most speciall gifts of nature, he was so snared with the fetters of lasciuious concupiscence, as reason could not redresse, what lust had ingrafted: his aged yéres yélded vnto vanity, so he turned away his mind from God, not daring to lift vp his eies to heauen, lest it should be a witnes of his wickednes, or a corrasiue to his guilty cõscience: for the remembrance of God is a terror to the vnrighteous, and the sight of his creatures is a sting to the minde of the reprobate. He therefore féeling his diuelish heart to be perplexed with such hellish passions, carelesly cast off the feare of God from before his eies, neither remembring that he was an Elder to giue good counsel, nor

a Iudge

a Iudge in the city, to minister right: his hoary haires could not hale him from sinne, nor his calling conuert him from filthinesse, but he grædily drunk vp the dregs of vnrighteousnesse, and carefully busked his braines to oppresse the simple, and to obtain his purpose, laid his plot thus. Being the chiefe Burgomaster in all the citty, hee determined to make a priuy search for some suspected person: and being master of the watch himselfe, to go vp into her chamber, and there to discouer the depth of his desire: so he thought to ioyne loue and opportunity in one vnion, and with his office and his age, to wipe out all suspition. Age is a crowne of glory when it is adorned with righteousnesse, but the dregs of dishonor when it is mingled with mischiefe: for honourable age consisteth not in the terme of yeares, nor is measured by the date of a mans daies: but godly wisdome, is the gray haire, and an vndefiled life is the old age. The Herbgrace the older it is, the ranker smell it hath: the Sea-star is most blacke being old: the Eagle the more yéeres, the more crooked is her bil: and the greater age in wicked men, the more vnrighteousnesse: which this Segnior Bernardo tried true: for desire made him hate delay, and therefore within two or three nights, picking out a watch answerable to his wish, he himselfe (as if it had bin some matter of great import) went abroad, and to colour his folly with the better shadow, he searched diuers houses, & at last came to the place where Isabel lay, charging the Host to rise, and to shew him her chamber, for (quoth he) I must confer with her of most secret affaires. The goodman of the house obeyed willingly, as one that held Bernardo in great reuerence, & brought him and the watch to the chamber dore. Bernardo taking a candle in his hand, bade them all depart, til he had talked with the Gentlewoman; which they did: and he entring in, shutting the dore, found her fast asléepe, which sight drawe the old Lecher into a maze: for there seeing nature in her pride, lust inueagled him the more, that he sate on the bed side a great while viewing of her beauty: at last starting vp, he awakt her out of a swéet slumber. Isabel loking vp, and séeing one of the Burgomasters in the Chamber, (for Bernardo was knowne for his grauity & wealth of euery one in the Citty) she was amazed, yet gathering her wits together, raising her vp on her pillow, she did him all the dutifull reuerence shee

might

might, wondring what wind should driue him into that place: at last the old Churle began to assaile her thus.

Bernardoes discourse to Isabel.

BE not amazed (faire Gentlewoman) to see me thus suddenly & secretly arriued, neither let my presence appall your senses: for I come not cruelly as a foe, but courteously as a friend. If my comming seeme strange, the cause is as straight; & where necessity forceth, there it is hard to striue against the streame; he that seeketh to sway against his owne wil, oftentimes kicketh against the prick: and he that striueth to withstand loue, hoppeth against the hill. These things considered (Mistris Isabel) if I offend in being too bold, your beauty shal beare the blame, as the onely cause of this enterprise: for to omit all circumstances, & to come to the matter. So it is, that since first mine eye fed of your sweet fauour, I haue bin so perplexed with the passions of loue, & haue bin so deeply drowned in the desire of your person, that there is no torment so terrible, no paine so pinching, no woe so grieuous, as the griefe that hath griped me since I burnt in loue of your swéet selfe: sith therefore my liking is such, let my liking be repaide againe with loue, let my firme fancie bee requited with mutuall affection, and in lieu of my good will, consent vnto me and bee my Paramour. That sinne which is secretly committed, is halfe pardoned, the liueth chastly enough, that liueth charily. The chamber doore is shut, no man either can detect vs of any crime, or dare suspect vs of any folly. The credit which I carry in the Citty shall bee sufficient to shrowde you from shame: my office will be able to defend you from mistrust, and my gray haires a pumice stone to race out all suspition, and by this small offence (Isabel) thou shalt both content me, and purchase to thy selfe such a dutifull friend, as in all seruice thou maist command, not onely ready to countenance thée with his credit, but to furnish all thy wants with his coyne: for what treasure & gold I haue, shall be thine to vse. Isabel hearing this subtile serpẽt to breathe out such wily reasons, wõdring to sée a man of his calling so blinded with the baile of lasciuious lust, as to blaspheme so diuellishly against his own cõscience, insomuch, that for a good space she sat astonished, until at last gathering her

wits together, she burst forth into these speeches.

Isabels reply to *Bernardo.*

THis a saying (Signior Bernardo) both old and true, that whose sinneth against his Conscience, sinneth against his owne soule: and he that knoweth the law, and wilfully disobeyeth, is worthy to be beaten with many stripes: which sentence of holy Writ I wish you to consider, and it will be a sufficient cooling cards to your inordinate desire. Hath God placed you as a Burgomaster of this Citie, and so a Judge ouer his people to punish sinne, and will you maintaine wickednesse? Is it your office to vphold the Law, and wil you destroy it? May, are you commanded to cut off this sinne with infamie, and yet will you perswade a woman to defile her husbands bed? Is it your duty to driue vs from all vncleane lust, and will you draw me to such folly? Is this the office of a Burgomaster? or beseemeth such thoughts to the minde of an Elder? doth the summons of death appeare in your gray head, & yet fleshly desires reigne in your heart? Doth thine old age impart a clere conscience, and your inward appetite fraught with concupiscence? Oh how pleasant a thing is it where grayheaded men minister iudgement, and the Elders caine good counsell: but how perilous a thing is it for the Ruler to be vnrighteous, or the Judge of the people to delight in sinne? Such a man shall haue coales heaped vpon his head, & the wrath of the Lord shall consume his heritage. Three sorts of men the Lord hates, and he vtterly abhorres the life of them, a poore man that is proud, a rich man that is a liar, and an old adulterer that doats, and is vnchaste. Hast thou then (Signior Bernardo) so sold thy selfe vnto sinne, and sworne to worke wickednes, that thou wilt prefer fading pleasure before lasting paine: and for the fulfilling of thy filthy lust, purchase perpetuall damnation? But put case I were so careless of mine honor and honesty, to yeld to thy request, should not thy selfe be a witnesse of my disloyaltie? would not mine owne workes cry out for vengeance to plague my wickednesse? yes, no doubt, after thou hast glutted thy fancy with the loathsomnesse of the sinne, and the spirit of man had toucht thy heart with the pricke of the offence, thou wouldest both detest me as a mirrour of immodestie, and account me for euer as a common harlot: for the Lord suffereth not the wicked

to

to goe vnrewarded. She (ſaith the Miſeman) thats common, and not content in her loue, yelding that which is proper to her huſband, into the poſſeſſion of another man, diſobeyes the Law, makes breach of her plighted troth, and laſtly, playes the whore in moſt hellish adultery: her children ſhall not take roote, nor her branches bring forth no fruit, her name ſhall be forgotten. And ſhall I then, knowing this, wilfully worke mine owne woes?

Shall I repay the troth my huſband repoſeth in me, with ſuch trecherie? Shall ſuch guilefull diſcurteſie be a guerdon for his good will? No, the feare of God is a fortreſſe againſt ſuch follie: the loue that I beare to my huſband, is a ſhield to fence me from ſuch ſhameleſſe fancy: and the care of mine owne honor is a conſerue againſt ſuch lawleſſe concupiſcence. Whereas you ſay, that ſinne ſecretly committed is halfe pardoned, & that the lineth *caſſe*, that lineth *cauté*: that the chamber doore is ſhut, that no man can eſpie our follie, and the place ſo ſecret that the offence cannot be preiudiciall to my good name, I anſwer, that I more eſteeme the wrath of God, then the words of men: that I dread more to commit ſuch a fact before the ſight of the Almightie, then before the eies of all the world.

Man iudgeth but ỹ body, but God the ſoule: the one being but a ſmal pinch, the other a perpetual paine. He that breaketh wedlocke, and thinketh thus in his heart, Who ſeth mé? the milkie clouds haue couered me, and I am compaſſed about with a fog of darknes: my offence ſhall not be an obiect to any mans eyes, neither cã my doing be diſcerned, for I am ſhrowded within the wals, whom need I to feare? and as for the Lord, he is mercifull, and will not remember any mans ſinnes: he is ſlow vnto wrath, and promiſeth ſpedily to pardon the faults of the wicked: Such a one as feareth more the eye of mortal man then the ſight of an immortal God, and knoweth not that the loks of the Lord are ten thouſand times brighter then the beames of the ſunne, beholding the very thoughts of men, and ſearching the hart and the reines, the ſame man ſhal be puniſhed with earthly plagues, he ſhal ſodainely be taken in his owne trap, and ſhall fall before the face of euery man, becauſe he preferred his owne pleaſure before the feare of the Lord. But alas, it is vnfit for the young fawn to leade the old buck: for a blind mã to be guide to him that

hath his light: and as vnmeete for a simple woman to instruct a Burgomaster and Elder of the Cittie. Is it my part to exhort you vnto vertue, or rather, is it not your dutie to perswade mee from vice? but I hope this proffer is but a tryall to make proofe of mine honestie, and to sift out my secret intent: if otherwise, your will and your words bee one, cease your suite, for you may long gape, and yet neuer gaine that you look for. Signior Bernardo hearing Isabel so cunningly to confute his conclusiue arguments, seeing she had infringed their reasons by the power of the law, thought to wrest her vpon a higher pinne, and to lay such a blot in her way, as she should hardly wipe out: for although he knew she did rightly refel his folly, & partly perceiued her counsaile cooled the extreme of his desires, yet the feare of God was so farre from him, that he prosecuted his intent thus.

Seignior Bernardoes answer to Isabels reply.

WHy Isabel (said hee) thinkest thou thy painted speeches, or thy hard denials shall preuaile against my pretended purpose? No, he is a coward that yeelds at the first shote, and he not worthy to weare the bud of beauty, that is daunted with the first repulse. I haue the tree in my hād, & mean to inioy the fruit; I haue beaten the bush, and now will not let the birds flie, & sith I haue you here alone, your sterne looks shall stand for no sterling: but if you consent, be assured of a most trustie friend, if not, hope for no other hap but open infamy. For thou knowest, Isabel, that a womans chiefest treasure is her good name, and that shee which hath crackt her credit, is halfe hanged, for death cuts off all miseries, but discredite is the beginning of all sorrowes.

With then infamy is worse then losse of life, assure thy selfe, I will sting thee to the quick, for I wil presently send thee to prison, and cause some ruffin in the city to sweare, that since the absence of thy husband Francesco, he hath laine with thee, and for coine vsed thee as his concubine: so shall I blemish thine honour: tie thee to some open punishment, and make thee a laughing stocke to the world, odious to thy friends, and to liue hated of thy husband: mine office and authoritie, my age and honour shall shadow my pretence, and helpe greatly to frame thy preiudice. Seeing then (faire Isabel) thou shalt by consent keepe the report of thy chastitie, and by deniall, gaine shame and reproch, shew thy

selfe

selfe a wise woman, and of two euils chuse the least.

Isabel hearing the mischieuous pretence of this subtil letcher, and seeing he had so cunningly laid the snare, that shee could not auoid the trap, but either she must incur the danger of the bodie, or the destruction of the soule, was so driuē into such a passionat dilemma, that she burst forth into teares, sighs, & plaints, which she blubbred forth on this wise. Alas (said she) most vile & vniust wretch, is the feare of God so farre from thy mind, that thou seekest, not onely to sacke mine honor, but to sucke my blood? Is it not iniury enough that thou seekest to spoile my honestie, but that you long to spil my life? hath thy sweet loue pretended such bitter tast? Is this the fruit of your fained fancie? No doubt the cause must be pernitious, when the effect is so pestilent. Flatter not your selfe in this thy folly, nor soth not thy thoughts in thy sins, for there is a God that seth and wil reuenge, and hath promised, that whoso binds two sins together, shall not be vnpunished in the one. But what auaileth it to talke of wisdome to a fole? or of the wrath of God to a wilfull reprobate? The Charmer, charme he neuer so wisely, charmes in vaine, if the Adder be deafe: and he casteth stones against the winde, that seekes to draw the wicked from their folly: let me therefore (poore soule) more narrowly consider mine owne case, I am perplexed with many doubtful passions, and grieuous troubles assaile me on euery side. If I cōmit this crime, though neuer so secretly, yet the Lord is *Cardiognostes*, & pierceth into the very thoughts, and mine owne conscience will be a continuall witnesse against me of this wickednes: *Stipendium peccati mors:* then what other hap can I hope for, but perpetuall damnation, sith God himselfe hath promised, to be a swift witnesse against all wilfull adulterers? If I consent not vnto this vnrighteous wretch, I am like to bee vniustly accused of the like crime, and so shal I, being guiltlesse, haue my honor euer blemisht with infamy. By this meanes, what a discredite shal I bring to my parents, to my husband, and my children? the hoarie haires of my Father shall be brought with sorrow vnto the graue, Francesco shall be ashamed to shew his face in the streets of the Citie, and my poore babes shall bee counted as the seed of an harlot, and yet alas I my selfe altogether faultlesse. Why, my secret offence shall preuent al this open shame:

The Lord is slow to wrath, and his mercy excéds al his workes: He wisheth not the death of a sinner: and hearty repentance pacifieth his displeasure. But O vile wretch that I am, why do I blaspheme thus against the Lord & his law? Why do I breathe out these hellish speeches: can I say, I wil repēt at my pleasure: Or shal I therefore sinne, in hope, because the Lord is merciful: No, no, it is better for me to fall into thy hands, and not commit the offence, then to sinne in the sight of the Lord. Shall I not rather feare God than man? and dread him more that killeth both soule and body, than him that hath power to kil the body onely? Yet his feare shall be thy defence. And with that she raised her selfe vp, spitted in his face, wishing him to doe his worst: wherupon hee called vp the watch, and commanded her to make her ready, for she should to prison. Her host wondring what the cause should bee, as a man priuie to her actions, and the vertue of her life, would haue giuen his word for her, that she should the next day answer whatsoeuer should be obiected against her: but his word would not be taken, for Bernardo was ful of fury, and carried her away to prison: where deeply grieued, & yet smothering her sorrow with patience, shé lay the rest of the night: the next morrow, as soone as the day brake, she cald for pen and incke, and wrote this mournefull Sonnet.

Isabels Sonnet that she made in prison.

Veritas non quærit angulos.

No storme so sharpe to rend the little Reede,
For sild it breakes, though euery way it bend.
The fire may heat, but not consume the flint,
The gold in furnace purer is indeede.
Report that sild to honor is a friend,
May many lies against true meaning mint:
But yet at last,
Gainst slanders blast,
Truth doth the silly faultlesse soule defend.

Though false reproach seekes honor to distaine,
And enuy bites the bud though ne're so pure:

Though

Though lust doth seeke to blemish chaste desire,
Yet truth that brookes not falshoods slandrous staine,
Nor can the spite of enuies wrath endure,
Will trie true loue from lust in iustice fire,
And maugre all,
Will free from thrall
The guiltlesse soule that sets his footing sure.

VVhere innocence triumpheth in her prime,
And guilt cannot approch the honest minde:
VVhere chaste intent is free from any misse,
Though enuie striue, yet searching Time,
VVith piercing insight will the truth out finde,
And make discouery who the guiltie is,
For time still tries
The truth from lies:
And God makes open what the world doth blind.
Veritas temporis filia.

Isabel wetting her Sonet with teares, and pronouncing euery line with a sigh, sate in a dump. Whilst the fame of this fact was spred abroad throughout all Caerbranke, euery man began sundry coniectures, as affection led them: her friends sorrowing, suspected the cankred mind of the Burgomaster: yet for his calling, durst not discouer their suspition: her foes laughing, said, that dissembled holines was a doubled sin, that the holiest countenance hath not alwaies the honestest conscience: both friend and foe notwithstanding wondring at the strange chance, seeing her outward actions, did manifest so many vertues. Wel, to be briefe, Signior Bernardo assembled the other Burgomasters of the towne into the common Hal, sent for Isabel thither; at whose comming (as the nature of man is desirous of nouelties) a great preasse of people was present to heare the matter throughly canuassed. When Isabel was thus brought before the barre, Signior Bernardo (who had suborned a young man in the City solemnly to depose that hee had laine with Isabel) began his inuectiue thus: I am sorry (graue citizens, and inhabitants of Caerbrancke) that this day I come to accuse Isabel, whose vertues hitherto haue

haue wonne her many fauors, and the outward shew of her good qualities haue bin highly applauded of all men: but my conscience constraines me, not to conceale such hainous sinne, nor to smother vp so great an offence without rebuke. I am one of the Iudges and Elders of the people, appointed by almighty God, chosen by the multitude, and constrained by the law, to haue no respect of persons, neither to be too rigorous to my foe, nor too partial to my friend: but with the ballance of equity to measure man according to his merit, and with the sword of iustice to vphold vertue, and beate downe vice. This considered, I am forced to discouer a wicked deede that this Isabel hath committed, and that is this.

This young man here present, for a certaine sum of money compounded to lie with Isabel, and for pence had his pleasure on her: shee alluring him with such wilie amorets of a Curtizan, that in her company hee hath consumed all his substance: The young mans friends seeing his folly, and that no perswasions could diswade him from affecting her, made cõplaint vnto me: whereupon I examined him, and found him, not guilty of the crime, but tractable to be reclaimed from his folly: seeing thẽ (Citizens of Caerbranke) such a curtizan as this may vnder the colour of holines shewd much preiudice, & allure many of our youth to mischiefes, I thought it my duty to bring her into open infamy, that she may be punished for her fault, known for a harlot, and from henceforth liue despised and hated of all. For proofe that she hath liued long in this lewd kind of life, this young man shall here before you all make present deposition: and with that he reacht him a Bible: whereon he swore, that he had long time conuerst dishonestly with Isabel, euer since the departure of her husband. At which oath, the people that were Iurours in the cause, beleeuing the protestation of Bernardo, and the deposition of the youth, presently found her guiltie: and then Bernardo and the rest of the Burgomasters gaue iudgement, that shee should presently haue some open & seuere punishment, and after bee banished out of the Towne. Assone as Isabel heard the censure, she appeald for no mercy, nor abatht any whit, as one destrous of fauour: but lifting vp her eyes to heauen, only said thus: O God, which seest the secrets of all harts, and knowest all things before

they

they come to passe, which discerneth the very inward thoughts, and trieth the heart and the reines: thou knowest, that because I would not consent vnto the filthy lust of this doting lecher, nor agrée by defiling my husbãds bed to fulfil his fleshly desires, that he hath lãdred me with a crime wherof I was neuer guilty, that he hath produced this young man by a sinister subordination, to periure himselfe in a fault, whereas not so much as in thought I cõmitted such a fact: he hath, to satisfie his malicious mind without cause, deuised this false crime. I cõfesse, O Lord, to be a most grieuous offender, & to deserue far greater punishment, but not for this déed. Heare then, O Lord, my prayer, & let the innocence of my cause plead before thy diuine maiesty: if it be thy will, preuẽt his practices, confound his counsels, & let him that hath digged a pit for others, fal into the snare himselfe. Thou hast neuer as yet, O Lord, left the succourlesse without help, but hast deliuered them which feare thée, from all aduersitie: thou diddest set frée Ioseph from the hands of his brethren, which sought to spill his blood, & diddest preuent the practices of Saul, intended against thy seruant Dauid: Elizeus being besieged within Dotham, was not only frée from his foes, but also garded about with a troope of holy Angels: Elias was preserued from the cruelty of Iezabel, and fed with Rauens. But chiefely in my case, how mightily diddest thou shewd Susanna from the trechery of the two Elders, in raising vp young Daniel to maintaine her right? May, who hath trusted in thy mercy, which hath come to mis-hap? or who hath put his hope in thée, and hath suffered harme? So, O Lord, if it be thy will, thou canst disclose the deuice of this Signor Bernardo, and vnfold the follies of this false witnesse: helpe then, O Lord, for in thée is my trust.

The people hearing the solemne protestations of sorrowfull Isabel, thought she had spoken these words to excuse her fault, but not that she was guiltlesse of the fact: giuing more credite to the reuerend age of Bernardo, and the oath of the young man, countenanced out by the Burgomaster, then to the young yeres of a simple woman, supposing her speeches were more of custome to cloake her follies, then of conscience to cléere her of that crime: & they would haue returned her backe againe vnto prison, till the day assigned for her punishment. As she was ready to be carried

away, he which had accused Isabel, start vp as a man lunaticke, and cryed out vnto the people thus: I haue sinned, men of Caerbrancke, I haue sinned: the thought of my present periurie is a hell to my conscience: for I haue sworne falsly against the innocent, and haue consented to condemne Isabel without a cause: & with that he discouered at the barre, how Signior Bernardo had suborned him against the Gentlewoman, and how in all his life before hée neuer was in her company. Vpon which confession of the young man, the Burgomasters examined the matter more effectually, and found that Isabel was cléere, chaste, honest, & vertuous, and Bernardo was a doting letcher: whereupon they not only amerced him in a great fine to bée paide to Isabel, but put him for euer after from bearing any office in the Cittie.

Thus was Isabel deliuered from her enemies, and reckoned more famous for her chastity through all Caerbrancke. This strange euent spred abroad through all the Countrie, and as fame flies swift & far, so at last it came to the eares of Francesco: for hée sitting in Troynouant at an Ordinarie, amongst other Gentlemen, heard this fortune of Isabel reported at the Table for strange newes by a Gentleman of Caerbranke, who brought in Isabel for a mirrour of chastity, and added this more, that shée was married to a Gentleman of ripe wit, good parentage, and well skild in the liberall Sciences, but (quoth he) an vnthrift, & one that hath bin from his wife fiue yéeres. At this all the table condemned him as passing vnkinde, that could wrong so vertuous a wife with absence. He was silent and blusht, feeling the worme of his conscience to wring him, & with such a sharp sting, that assoone as he got into his chamber, he fell to meditate with himselfe of the great abuses he offered his wife, the excellencie of her exteriour perfection, her beauty, vertue, and other rare ornaments of nature, presented thēselues vnto his thoughts, that hee began not only to be passing passionate, but déeply penitent, sorrowing as much at his former follies, as his hope was to ioy in ensuing good fortunes. Now hee saw, that *Omnia sub sole vanitas*: that beauty without vertue, was like to a glorious flower without any operatiō, which the Apothecaries set in their shops for to be séene, but assoone as it withereth, they cast it into ỳ fornace as an vnprofitable wéede: that the imbracings of a Curti-

zan,

ſan, ſéme they neuer ſo ſwéet, yet they were the paths to deſtruction: that their lookes are ſtales vnto death, and the foldes of their hands, are fetters to ſnare men in ſinne. Now he ſaw that pride was extreme folly; for ſuch as lookt moſt high againſt the Sunne, grew ſooneſt blind: that Icarus caught his fall by ſoaring high: that time ill ſpent in vanity, in riotous company, amongſt a crue of careleſſe Caualiers, that would boaſt it in the towne, not braue it in the field, was neither to be recalled nor recompenſt. Oh Franceſco (quoth he) how fondly haſt thou beene led away with euery looke, fed vpon with trencher-flies, eaten aliue with flatterers, giuen to looke at a Goddeſſe more then thy God, more readie to a Bowle then thy Booke, ſquaring in the ſtrétes, when thou ſhouldſt bée meditating in thy Chamber? If thou knoweſt theſe to be extreme parts of folly, repent & amend. The Déere knowing Tamariſk is deadly to his nature, ſcornes to come néere the trée. The Unicorne will not brook to reſt vnder a Cytren trée, for that he holds it mortall. The Elephant will fly out of the cõpany of a murtherer. Theſe brute beaſts auoid what nature tels them is perillous: thou hunteſt after thoſe harmes with greédines, that thou knoweſt are preiudiciall. Wel Franceſco, then now or elſe neuer away with ſuch follies: ſtop at the bottome, and then it is Sero, yet let it be Serio: home to the wife of thy youth, reconcile thy ſelf to her, ſhe will forgiue and forget thy former fondnes, & entertain her penitent paramor, with as great kindnes as he comes home with penance: What man? *Nunquam ſera eſt ad bonos mores via.* With that Franceſco tooke pen, and paper, and wrote this.

Franceſcoes Sonnet made in the prime of his penance.

With ſweating browes I long haue plow'd the ſands:
My ſeed was youth, my crop was endleſſe care,
Repent hath ſent home with empty hand,
At laſt, to tell how rife our follies are:
And time hath left experience to approoue,
The gaine is griefe to thoſe that traffique loue.
The ſilent thought of my repentant yeeres
That fill my head, haue cald me home at laſt:

Now loue vnmaskt a wanton wretch appeares,
Begot by guilefull thought with ouer-hast:
In prime of youth, a Rose, in age, a Weed,
That for a minutes ioy, payes endlesse meed.
Dead to delights, a foe to fond conceit,
Alied to wit by want, and sorrow bought:
Farewell fond youth, long fostred in deceit,
Forgiue me Time disguised idle thought.
And loue adew, lo, hasting to my end,
I finde no time too late for to amend.

HAuing framed this Sonnet, hee gaue the coppy to some of his friends, making manifest to them his resolutiō to leaue Troynouant, and to goe home; and by their helpe, who furnished him with such necessaries as he did want, he in short time tooke his iorney. The day of his departure was ioyful to al his frieds, insomuch that as many as knew of his iourney, gathered themselues together, and made him a banquet: where (very merry & pleasant) they carowst to the health of his Isabel: One amongst the rest, who loued Francesco so tenderly, toke a cup of wine in his hand, and with teares in his eies, said thus: Francesco, I haue nothing to giue thee, being my self pinched with want, but some precepts of wit that I haue bought with much experience, those shalt thou haue at my hands, which if thou put in practice, thinke I haue giuen much treasure.

The farewell of a friend.

1 Let Gods worship be thy mornings worke, and his wisedome the direction of thy daies labour.
2 Rise not without thanks, nor sleep not without repentance.
3 Choose but a few friends, and try those: for the flatterer speakes faireſt.
4 If thy wife bee wise, make her thy Secretary; else locke thy thoughts in thy heart, for women are seldome silent.
5 If she be faire, be not iealous; for suspition cures not womens follies.
6 If she be wise, wrong her not: for if thou loueſt others, shee will loath thee.
7 Let thy childrens nurture bee their richeſt portion: for wisedome

dome is more precious then wealth.

8 Be not proud amongſt thy poore neighbours: for a poore mans hate is perillous.

9 Nor too familiar with great men: for preſumption winnes diſdaine.

10 Neither bee too prodigall in thy fare, nor die not indebted to thy belly, enough is a feaſt.

11 Be not enuious, leſt thou fall in thine owne thoughts.

12 Vſe patience, mirth, and quiet: for care is enemy to health.

And Franceſco (quoth his friend) that thou maiſt remember my precepts, I drink to thee: vpon this he pledged him, and ſo in pleaſant chat they paſt away the time till breakfaſt was done, & then he gat him to horſe, and they brought him a mile out of the Cittie. At laſt, although they plaid loth to depart, yet Franceſco muſt away: but before hee departed, when they were readie to ſhake hands, he puld out of his ſleeue a Sonet that he made, and gaue it them.

Franceſcoes Sonnet called his parting blow.

REaſon that long in priſon of my will,
Haſt wept thy Miſtris wants and loſſe of time,
Thy wonted ſiege of honour ſafely clime.
To thee I yeeld as guiltie of mine ill.

Loe (fettred in their teares) mine eyes are preſt,
To pay due homage to their native guide:
My wretched heart wounded with bad betide,
To craue his peace, from reaſon is addreſt.

My thoughts aſham'd, ſince by themſelues conſum'd,
Haue done their duty to repentant wit:
Aſham'd of all, ſweet guide, I ſorry ſit,
To ſee in youth how I too farre preſum'd:

That he whom loue and errour did betray,
Subſcribes to thee, and takes the better way:

Sero ſed ſerio.

As soone as he had deliuered them the sonnet, shaking hands, he put spurs to his horse and rode onward on his iourny: within fiue daies he arriued at Caerbrancke, where as soone as he was lighted, he went to the house where his wife sojourned; and one of the maids espying Francesco, yet knew him for al his long absence, and ran in and told it to Isabel, that her husband was at the dore: she being at work in her chamber, sate as one in an extasie, vntill Francesco came vp, who at the first sight of his wife, considering the excellency of her beauty, her vertues, chastitie, and other perfections, & measuring her constancie with his disloyalty, stoode as a man metamorphosed: at last he began thus. Ah Isabell, what shall I say to thy fortunes or my follies? what exordiũ shal I vse to shew my penãce, or discouer my sorrowes, or expresse my present ioyes? for I tell thée I conceiue as great pleasure to sée thée wel: as griefe in that I haue wronged thée with my absẽce. Might sighes (Isabel) teares, plaints, or any such exterior passions pourtray out my inward repẽtance, I would shew thée the Anatomy of a most distressed man: but amongst many sorrowing thoughts, there is such confusion, that superfluitie of griefes stops the source of my discontent. To figure out my follies, or the extremity of my fãcies, were but to manifest the bad course of my life: and to rub the scar, by setting out mine owne scathe: and therfore let it suffice, I repent hartily, I sorrow dẽply, and meane to amend and continue in the same constantly. At this Francesco stood and wept, which Isabel seeing, conceiued by his outward griefs his secret passions, and therefore taking him about the neck, wetting his chéekes with the teares that fel from her eyes, she made him this womanly and wise answer.

What, Francesco, commest thou home full of woes, or séekest thou at thy returne to make me wẽpe? Hast thou bẽn long absent, & now bringest thou mee a treatise of discontent? I sée thou art penitent, & therefore I am like not to heare what follies are past. It suffiseth for Isabel, that henceforth thou wilt loue Isabel, and vpon that condition without any more wordes, welcome to Isabel. With that she smiled and wept, & in doing both together, sealed vp all her contrarie passions in a kisse. Many lookes past betwéen them, many odde fancies and many fauours: but what they did, or how they agreed in secret, that cannot I tel; but forth they

they came great friends out of the chamber, where Franceſco was welcomed home of his wiues Hoſt with great cheare: who to ſhew his kindnes the more, had prouided a ſolemne banquet, hauing bidden many of his neighbors to ſupper, that they might accompany Franceſco. Wel, ſupper being done, & then ſitting by the fire, the Hoſte ſeing them all in a dump, ſaid, that to driue them out of their melancholy, he would tell them a tale, which, they all deſirous of, ſate ſient, and he began thus.

The Hoſts tale.

IN Theſſaly, where Nature hath made the ſoile proude with the beauty of Shepheards, there dwelled a ſwaine called Selador: ancient, as hauing age ſeated in his haires: and wealthy, as infeoffed with great poſſeſſions: and honeſt, as being indued with many vertuous qualities. This Selador had to ioy him in his age, a daughter of great beautie, ſo exquiſite in her exteriour feature, as no blemiſh might eclipſe the glory that Nature beſtowed in her lineaments. As thus ſhe was faire, ſo was ſhee wiſe, and with her wit ioyned vertue, that to behold, ſhe was Helena, to heare, Pallas, and to court, a Daphne. This Damſel whoſe name was Mirimida, kept her fathers ſhéep, and in a ſcarlet peticoate, with a chaplet of flowers on her head, went euery day to the fields, where ſhe plide the care of her fathers folds with ſuch diligence, that ſhee ſéemed with labour, to enter armes againſt want, & with her hands thrift, to preuent her harts griefe. Vſing thus daily the plaines of Theſſaly, the ſhepheards delighted at the gaze of ſo excellent an obiect, held their eyes fortunate when they might behold her feature, eſteeming him happy that could lay his flocks neereſt vnto her folds. Amongſt the reſt of all the ſwaines that fed their thoughts on her fauours, there was one called Eurymachus, a yong youth, that had the pride of his yéeres triumphing in his countenance, wittie, and full of pleaſant conceits; and that Fortune might iumpe with loue, and make him gracious in womens eyes, he was wealthy, for gold is the Chriſocol of loue. This Eurymachus alwaies ſo plotted the courſe of his ſheepe-walke, that he was next neighbour to Mirimida, inſomuch, that to diſcouer his fancie, he did her often fauors: for whē

any

any of her Lambs went astray, or any thing grew amisse, then Eurymachus was the swaine that endeuored by his labor to redresse euery losse. By this meanes he waxed priuate, & familiar with Mirimida, which was the meanes that brought him into a preiudicial labyrinth: for he did so nére *accedere ad ignem*, that he did *calescere plus quàm satis*: for as none comes nére the fume of the Pisselden, but he waxeth blinde, nor any touch the Salamander, but he is troubled with the palsie: so none could gaze on the face of Mirimida, but they went away languishing. This did poore Eurymachus experience: for although hee knew loues fires were fatall, & did not warme, but scorch: yet he loued with the bird to flye to the flame, though he burnt his wings, & fell in the bush: hee would not with Vlisses stop his eares, but sit & sing with the Syrens: he feared no enchauntment, but carowst with Circes, till his ouer-daring drew him in a passionate danger, and so lõg sucked in the beauty of Mirimida, with his euer thirsty eies, till his heart was fuller of passions then his eyes of affections; yet discouer his thoughts he durst not, but smothered vp his inward paines with outward silence: hauing the Muen the hotter within, for that it was damd vp, and his griefs the deeper, for that they were concealed. Manifest his maladie to her he durst not, he thought himselfe too homely a patient for such a Phisition: to vtter his loues to another, & make any to his secretary but himself, he supposed was to draw in a riual to his loues. Thus Eurymachus was perplexed, till at last, to giue a little vent to the flame, sitting on a day on a hil, he puld forth pen and incke, and wrote his fancy. The effects were these.

Eurymachus fancy in the prime of his affection.

When Lordly Saturne in a sable robe,
Sate full of frownes, and mourning in the West,
The euening starre scarce peept from out her lodge,
And *Phœbus* newly gallopt to his rest:
Euen then
Did I
Within my boate sit in the silent streames,
And void of cares as he that lies and dreames.
As *Phao*, so a Ferriman I was,

The

The country lasses said I was too faire,
With easie toile I laboured at mine oare,
To passe from side to side who did repaire:
And when
Why, (for I am Queene of loue)
For paines take pence, and *Charon* like transport,
As soone the swaine as men of high import.
When want of worke did giue me leaue to rest,
My sport was catching of the wanton fish:
So did I weare the tedious time away,
And with my labour mended ere my dish:
For why
I thought
That idle houres was Calenders of sinne,
And time ill spent, was preiudice to youth.
I scorn'd to loue, for were the Nymph as faire,
As she that loued the beauteous Latmon swaine,
Her face, her eyes, her tresses, nor her browes,
Like Iuory could my affection gaine?
For why,
I said
With high disdaine Loue is a base desire,
And Cupids flames, why, th'are but watry fire.
As thus I sate disdaining of proud loue,
Haue ouer Perrinah there cryed a boy,
And with him was a Paragon for hue,
A louely Damsel beauteous and coy,
And there
With her
A maiden couered with a tawnie vale,
Her face vnseene for breeding louers bale.
I stird my boate, and when I came to shoare,
The boy was wing'd, me thought it was a wonder,
The dame had eyes like lightning, or the flash
That runnes before the hot report of thunder,
Her smiles
Were sweet,

Louely her face, was ne're so faire a creature,
For earthly carcasse had a heauenly feature.
My friend (quoth she) sweet Ferriman behold,
We three must passe, but not a farthing fare,
But I will giue (for I am Queene of loue)
The brightest lasse thou lik'st vnto thy share:
Choose where
Thou loueſt.
Be she as faire as Loues sweet Lady is,
She shall be thine, if that will be thy bliſſe.
With that she smil'd with such a pleasing face,
As might haue made the marble rocke relent,
But I that triumpht in disdaine of loue,
Bad fie on him that to fond loue was bent:
And then
Said thus,
So light the Ferriman for loue doth care,
As *Venus* passe not if she pay no fare.
At this a frowne sate on her angry brow,
She winkes vpon her wanton sonne hard by:
He from his quiuer drew a bolt of fire,
And aym'd so right, as that he pierst mine eye.
And then
Did she
Draw down the veile that hid the virgins face,
Whose heauenly beauty lightned al the place.
Straight then I lean'd mine eare vpon mine arme,
And lookt vpon the Nimph (if so) was faire:
Her eyes were starres, and like *Apolloes* lockes
Me thought appear'd the tramels of her haire.
Thus did
I gaze
And suckt in beauty, till that sweet desire
Cast fuell on, and set my thoughts on fire.
When I was lodg'd within the net of loue,
And that they saw my heart was all on flame,
The Nymph away, and with her trippes along
The winged boy, and with her goes his dame.

Oh

Oh then
I cryed,
Stay Ladies, stay, and take not any care,
You all shall passe, and pay no penny fare.
Away they fling, and looking coyly backe,
They laugh at me, ah with a loud disdaine.
I send out sighes to ouertake the Nimphs,
And teares as lures to call them backe againe:
But they
Flie thence.
But I sit in my boate, with hand on oare,
And feele a paine, but knowes not what's the soare.
At last I feele it is the flame of loue,
I striue, but bootlesse, to represse the paine,
It cooles, it fires, it hopes, it feares, it frets,
And stirreth passions throughout euery vaine:
That downe
I sate,
And sighing, did faire *Venus* lawes approoue
And swore, nothing so sweet and sowre as loue.
Et florida pungunt.

Hauing made this Canzon, hée put it in his bosome, and oft when he was by himselfe would reade it, easing his passion with viewing the conceits of his own fancy: on a day hauing brought downe his shéepe, he espies Mirimida, and to her he goes, and after his wonted salute sat downe by her, & fell to such chat: occasion did minister, intermeddling his passions with so many sighs, and firing his eie so effectually vpon her face without remoue, that she perceiued the Shepheard had swallowed Aconiton, and that there was none but she that boze the Antidote. As thus she noted his passions, she espied a scrole of paper sticking out of his bosome, which she snatched forth & vnfolded, and perceiuing it was a Sonet, she read it, and then looking earnestly on Eurymachus, he blusht, and she with friendly smile began to crosse him with this frump. What, Eurymachus, cannot wonted labours wipe away wanton Amours, nor thy shéepes care preuent thy hearts loue? I had thought fancy had not trode on thy héele, nor affection presented any obiect to thine eie: but now I

sée, as the Camelion cannot liue without aire, nor the Salamander without fire, so men haue no quiet in their life, vnlesse they acquaint them with loue: I sée, swaines are not such swads, but they haue thoughts and passions, and be they neuer so low, they can looke at beauty. Coridon in his gray cassocke, had his faire Phillis, and Menalcas could court Calatea in his Shepheardes cloake; and Eurymachus, be he neuer so homely, will hazard, but at whom, there lies the question.

At whom (quoth Eurymachus?) ah Mirimida at one that is too high for my thoughts, & too beauteous for my fortunes: so what I haue soared with the Hobby, I shall bate with the Bunting: and daring with Phaeton, I shall drowne with Icarus: mine eie was proud, my thoughts too forward: I haue starred at a starre, but shall stumble at a stone; & I feare, because I haue ouer-lookt in loue, I shal be ouer-laid in loue. With that he sighed, and Mirimida smiled and made this reply. Why Eurymachus, a man or a mouse? what, is there any Cedar so high, but the slowest Snaile wil créepe to the top? & fortune so base, but will aspire? any loue so precious, but hath his prize? What Eurymachus, a Cat may look at a King, and a swaines eie hath as high a reach as a Lords looke. Vulcan in his leather sutes courted Venus in her silks: the swaine of Latmos woed Luna; both dared, and both had their desires. What, Loue requires not wealth, but courage, and parentage is not so high prized by fancie, as personage: feare not, man, if thou hast lookt high, follow thy thoughts, and try loues fauors, for denial is no dishonour. Eurymachus hearing Mirimida in such an amorous humour, encouraged by her perswasions, thought now to strike while the iron was hot, and therefore taking her by the hand, began thus.

Truth Mirimida, Venus lawes are bounded with constraint, and when loue leadeth the eye, desire kéepes no company: when Paris courted Helena, though she were coy and denied, yet was she not discourteous and disdained, for she answered thus mildly: *Nemō etenim succenset amanti.* This (Mirimida) makes mée hardy to take thée by the hand, and to say, I loue Mirimida: for thou art the Sun that hast eclipst mine eies, on thy beauty haue I so long gazed, that as they which were wounded with Achilles Launce, could not be healed but by the same truncheon: so

thine

thine excellence hath fettered Eurymachus, that thy curtesie must free Eurymachus. I confesse I haue lokt too high, but I excuse mine owne presumption by thine owne principles: and if I haue dared too much, why loue allowes it. Then faire Nimph, if thou beest as beautifull as Venus, yet loke at blacke Vulcan: low fortunes haue high desires, if thou beest as louely as Luna, stoope to Endymion: a Swain may be as constant as a King. Shepheards loues are loiall, for their eies are like Emeraldes that receiue but one impression, and their hearts like Adamants that will turne no way but to one point of the heauen. Mirimida frowning at the folly of the Shepheard, cut him off thus.

If thou knewest how bad the corne is, Eurymachus (quoth she) thou wouldest not put thy sickle so farre in, and seeing your harnest is like to be so little, spare labour, and worke not so hard: if you haue lokt at my beauty, your aime is not beyond compasse, your high straines are but frumps, so I take them: for he that calles a Faulcon a Phenix, is but a flatterer: and such as terme their loue, Saints, are thought but to vtter words of course.

Wel, howsoeuer, if you loue me, I like you, but so as Dianaes fancy was to Apollo, to be his friend in the field, and his foe in the chamber; to fauour him as a huntsman, but to hate him whē he chatted of loue: so Eurymachus, so long as thou fouldest thy flocks with Mirimida, thou art welcome to Mirimida, but if thou castest forth thy lure to haue Mirimida loue, then I will leaue thee to thy folly, as one that hates to bee drawne to fancie: for know, that as the Olive tree will brooke no touch of steele: the Agate no heate of fire: so Mirmidaes eares are not capable of any amorous persuasions: and therefore friend Eurymachus, any thing but loue, and so I leaue you.

Nay (quoth Eurymachus) and he tooke her fast by the arme, if I were sure you had power as Diana had, to plague mee with Acteons punishment, you passe not without a little more prattle: if I anger you, tis first a preparation to a good stomacke, for choler is a friend to digestion: secondly, as the Chrisocoll, and the Gold by long striuing together grow to be one mettall, so by our falling out, we shall be better friends for euer: for

Amantium ire amoris redintegratio est.

Therefore (faire Mistris) sit still, and grant some fauor to him

that is so pained with fancie; I will loue you, though I am poore: and a king can do but so much: if you think my degree be too low for height of beauty, think of al parts, the mean is the merriest, & that the shepheards gray hath lesse griefe then the lordly estates. I know, women must be coy, because they are women, and they must haue time to be wonne, or else they would be thought to be wantons: therefore whatsoeuer you say now, I hold it not authẽtical: yet for that I would haue some hope: good Mirimida, let me see thée laugh. Shee could not but smile, to see the Shepheard so pleasant, and so Eurymachus rested content, and from amorous chat they fell to talke of other matters, till euening grew on, and then they folded their sheep, and with a friendly farewel parted.

Eurymachus was not alone thus enamoured of the faire Mirimida, but all the Shepheards of Thessaly writ Poemes and Ditties of her beautie, and were suters to her for fauor, she like Daphne held loue in disdaine, and yet was curteous to all in any other kinde of conference. Amongst the rest, Venus (belike) willing to be pleasãt, had wrapt one in the labyrinth of loue, called Mullidor, a fellow that was of honest parẽts, but very poore, and his personage was as it had been cast in Esops mould, his backe like a Lute, and his face like Thirsites, his eies broad and tawnie, his haire harsh and curled like a horse maine, his lippes were of the largest sise in folio, able to furnish a Coblers shoppe with clouting leather: the only good part that he had to grace his visage was his nose, and that was conqueror-like, as beaked as an Eagle: Nature hauing made so proper a stripling, thought his inward qualities should not blemish his outward excellence; & therefore to keepe proportion, into his great head she put in little wit, that he knew rather sheepe by the marke then the number, for hee was neuer good Arithmetician, and yet hee was a proper scholer, and well seene in Ditties. This russling Shepheard amongst the rest, and more then any of the rest, was enamoured of Mirimida, so that hee would often leaue his sheepe at random, to passe by the fields where she sate, only to féede his eie with fauour. Well, as fooles haue eies, so haue they hearts, and those oft harbour fond desire: Loue sometimes looks low, & will stumble on a cottage aswell as on a palace: fooles are in extremities, not easie to be perswaded from their bable, & when they

begin

begin to loue, fully whets them on to restles thoughts. So fell it out with Mullidor: for after he had talked of the beauty of Mirimida, he grew passionate, but with great impatience, and wasted away in the despaire of his own desires, that he was waxen pale and wan: which his old mother espying, maruelled to see her son so male-content, for she loued him tenderly, and thought him the sweetest youth, and brauest young man in all Thessaly. The Crow thinkes her fowles the fairest, and the Ape accounts of her young as well featured darlings: so Calena, (for so was the olde womans name) thought Mullidor no lesse, though his eares were greater thē an Asse, but held him of a sweet personage and rare wit. Well, the poore old wife, when her son came home at night, seeing how il he lookt, marueld what should be the cause of his suddaine change: yet because she would follow the principles of country phisick, she thought to passe ouer speaking to him till supper was done, to try what stomacke he had. Well, the cloth was laid, and the browne loafe set on the board. Mullidor full of passions, sat down to his pottage, & eate off his boll ful, the old woman stumbles to the pot againe for a fresh messe. Ah mother (quoth he with a great sigh) no more broth to night: with that she clapt her hand on her knée, and swore, her boy was not wel, that he forsooke his supping: yet he fell to a péece of Bacon that stood on the boord, & a tough barly pudding: but he rose before the rest and got into a corner, where folding his armes together, he sat thinking on his loue. Assone as the rest of the swains were vp from the table, and turning crabbes in the fire, she tooke her son into the celler, & sitting down in her chaire, began thus.

Son Mullidor, thy chéekes are leane, & now thou lookest like Lenton, pale and wan, I saw by thy stomack to night, thou art not thine owne man: thou hadst of late (God saue thée) a lonely fat paire of chéekes, and now thou lookest like a shotten herring: Tel me Mullidor, and feare not to tel me, for thou tellest it to thy mother, what ailest thou? Is it griefe of body, or of mind, that kéepes thée on the Holydaies from frisking it at the foote-ball? Thou art not as thou wert wont: and therefore say what thou ailest, and thou shalt sée old women haue good counsell.

At these speéches of his mother, Mullidor fetcht a great sigh: and with that (being after supper) he brake wind: which Calena

na hearing, oh ſonne (quoth ſhe) it is the collicke that troubles thée, to bed man, to bed, and we will haue a warme pot lid. The collicke mother, no: tis a diſeaſe that all the cunning women in the country cannot cure, and ſtrangely it holdes me: ſometimes it holdes me in the head, ſome-whiles in mine eyes: my hart, my hart, oh there (my mother) it plaies the diuell in a mortar: ſomewhile it is like a froſt, cold: ſometimes as a fire, hotte: when I ſhould ſleepe, then it makes me wake: when I eate, it troubles my ſtomacke: when I am alone, it makes mee cry right out, I can wet one of my new lockeram Napkins with weeping. It came to me by a great chance: for as I looke on a faire flower, a thing, I know not what, crept in at mine eies, and ranne round about all my veines, and at laſt, gat into my heart, and there euer ſince hath remaind, and there (mother) euer ſince ſo wringes me, that Mullidor muſt die; and with that hée fell on weeping. Celena ſeeing her ſonne ſhed teares, fell to her hempen apron, and wipte her bleared eyes, and at laſt demanded of him if it were not loue. At that queſtion he hung downe his head, and ſighed. Ah my ſonne (quoth thé) now I ſée tis loue: for hee is ſuch a ſneaking fellow, that if he but leape in at the eye-lid, and dine downe into the heart, and there reſts as cold as a ſtone, yet touch him, and he will ſcréeke: for tell me, Mullidor, what is ſhé that thou loueſt, and will not loue thée? If ſhe be a woman, as I am, ſhe cannot but fancy thée: for mine eye, though it be now old (and with that went vp her apron, & ſhe wipte them cleare) hath béene a wanton when it was young, and would haue choſen at the firſt glance, the proppereſt ſpringall in the Pariſh: and truſt me, Mullidor, but be not proud of it, when I looke on thée, I find thée ſo louely, that I count her worſe then accurſt, would not chuſe thée for her Paramour. With theſe wordes Mullidor beganne to ſmile, and troubled his mother ere ſhe had halfe ended her tale, on this manner.

Mother, I may rightly compare the Church to a looking glaſſe, for as a man may ſée himſelf in the one, and there ſée his proportion: ſo in the other, the wenches eyes are a certificate: for vpon whom you ſée all the girles looke, hée for foote and face, carries away the bell; and I am ſure, for theſe two yéeres I neuer came into the Church, & was no ſooner ſet, but the wenches began to

winke

winke me on another, to looke on me and laugh. Oh feare mother, when a dogge wagges his taile, hee loues his master, and when a wanton laughes, for my life she is ouer the head & eares in loue. Then if my fortune serue me to be so well thought on, why should I not venture on her I loue? It is (mother) Saladors daughter Mirmida. Now Gods blessing on thy heart (quoth Calena) for louing such a snugge lasse, marry her (my sonne) and thou shalt haue my benizon in a clout. Mirimida? marrie it is no maruell, if thy chekes be fallen for her: why, she is the fairest blossome in all the Towne: to her, sonne, to her, trick thy selfe vp in thy best reparrel, & make no bones of it: but on a wooing: for womens desires, I may tell thee boy, are like childrens fancies, wonne oft with an Apple, when they refuse an Angell; and Mullidor, take this with thee and feare not to spede: A womans frowne is not euer an instance of choler: if she refuse thee outwardly, she regardes thee inwardly, and if she shake thee vp, and bid thee be packing, haue the better hope. Cats & dogs come together by scratching: if she smile, then Sonne, say to thy selfe, she is thine; and yet Women are wily cattel, for I haue seene a woman laugh with anger, and kisse him shee hath desired to kill: she will be coy (Mullidor) but care not for that, tis but a thing of course: speake thou faire, promise much, praise her highly, commend her beauty aboue all, and her vertue more then all, sigh often, and shew thy selfe full of passions, and as sure as thy cap is of wooll, the wench is thine.

Mullidor hearing his mother giue such good counsaile, said he would ieopard a ioynt, and the next day haue a fling at her. With that he said, his heart was eased, and his stomack somewhat come downe with her good perswasion: whereupon the Ambry was opened, and he turned me ouer a cantle of Cheese, & went to bed. The next morning vp he rose, & his holyday robes went on, his Kartups new blackt, his cap faire brusht, & a cleane lockeram band. Thus attired, away flings Mullidor to the field, and carried away his sheepe, and led them into the plains where Mirimida sought to feed her flocks: comming there, hee met her all alone, sitting all alone vnder a Beech tree, weauing of nets, to catch birds: as soone as Mullidor spyed her, his heart leapt for ioy, and shee seeing him, laught, which was a great helpe to his

courage: that rushing roughly toward her, he said thus.

Quoth he Mirimida, here is weather that makes grasse plentie, and sheepe fat, by my troth there neuer came a more plenteous yere: and yet I haue one sheepe in my fold thats quite out of liking, and if you knew the cause, you would marualle. The other day as he was grasing, he espied a spotted ewe feeding before him, with that he fell to gaze on her, and that so long, that he wagged his taile for very ioy; hee came to her, and with a sheepish curtisie courted her; the ewe was coy and butted him, which strook him so to the hart, that casting a sheps eye at her, away he goes, and ever since he lies by himselfe and pines away. I pray you quoth he Mirimida, what think you of this ewe? Mirimida perceiuing by this simile, that little wit had oft fancies, and soules were within the compasse of Loues warrant: whereupon thinking to bring him into a paradice, she made this answere.

I am an ill iudge, Mullidor, and yet because I am a Shepheardesse, and this is a sheepish question, that the Ewe should be the first that should be fatted of all the flocke: and in reuenge of her cruelty, sold to the Butcher. For I tell thee, Mullidor, she that is cruell in loue, is like to a Rose, that pricks when it should be gathered. Say you so Mirimida (quoth he?) then may I be the bolder to breake out my mind vnto you; for surely I am the sheepe that euer since I markt your beauty, haue been inflamed with your sweet lookes, and not daring boult out mine affection, haue pined away, as you may see by my cheekes: and refuse my foode: and you Mirimida are the Ewe that hath caught Mullidor captiue. Therefore now that I vtter how I loue, and conet how you should loue againe, take heed you refuse not: for if you do, by my iudgement you shall be sold to the Butcher for your cruelty. Mirimida, hearing the alle ruffle in his rude eloquence, smiled to her selfe, and thought that Venus fires as well warme the poore as the rich, and that deformity was no meanes to abridge fancy: wherupon she replied thus. Why Mullidor, are you in loue? and with mee, is there none but Mirimida that can fit your eye? being so many beautiful damsels in Thessaly? take heede, man, looke before you leape, lest you fall into the ditch: I am not good enough for so proper a man as your selfe, especially being his mothers sweet sonne, what, Mullidor, let me counsaile you, there are

more

more maids then Malkin, & the country hath such choice as may breed your better content: for my part at this time, I meane not to marry. Tis no matter, quoth Mullidor, what you say: for my mother told me, that maides at first would be coy when they are wooed, and mince it as it were a Mare ouer a mouthfull of thistles, & yet were not a whit the worse to be likte, for twas a matter of custome. Well then Mullidor, quoth Mirimida, leaue off at this time to talke of loue, & hope the best: to morrow perchance it will be better, for women are like vnto children, that will oft refuse an apple, and straight cry for the paring, and when they are most hungry, then for fullenes fast. This Mullidor, quoth she, is the frowardnes of loue. Marry then, quoth he, if they haue childrens maladies, t'were good to vse childrens medicines, & thats a rod, for be they neuer so froward, a ierke or two wil make them forward: and if that would bring women to a good temper, my mother hath a stiffe cudgell, and I haue a good arme.

Thus these two past away the day, till presently they espied a farre off a Gentleman with a hawke on his fist, to come riding towards them, who drawing nie, and seeing so faire a Nimph, reind his horse and stood still, as Actæon, when he gazed at Diana: at the last he alighted, and comming towards her, saluted her thus curteously. Faire virgin, whē I saw such a sweet saint with such a crooked apostle, I straight thought Venus had been walking abroad to take the aire with Vulcan: but as sone as mine eies begā narrowly to make surney of thy beauty, I found Venus blemisht with thy rare excellency: happy are these sheepe that are folded by such a paragon: and happy are those sheepeheards that enioy the presence of such a beauteous creature, no maruel if Apollo became a swaine, or Mercury a neat-heard, whē their labours are recompenst with such loues. My selfe, faire damosel, if either my degrée were worthy, or my deserts any, wold craue to haue entertainement to become your dutifull seruant. At this while Mirimida held downe her head, and blusht: at last, lifting vp her eyes full of modestie, and her face full of chaste colours, such as floorish out the fronts of Dianaes virgins, she made the Gentleman this answer. My seruant sir (said she)? no, your worth is far aboue my wealth, and your dignitie too high for my degrée; poore country dāsels must not aime to his at fortune,

nor flie too fast in desires, lest looking at their féete with the peacocke, they let fall their plumes, & so shame at their owne follies: but if my degrée were so great as to entertaine such seruants, I must bestow vpon them some changeable liuery, to shew the varietie of their mindes: for certaine, mens hearts are like to the Polype, that will change into all colours but blue, and their thoughts into all effects but constancie: in that sir, your eie dazeled and mistooke me for Venus, you gazde against the sunne, and so blemisht your sight, or else you haue eaten of the rootes of hemlocke, that makes mens eyes conceit vnsœne obiects: howsoeuer (as I take you for a Gentleman) so I take your praise for a frumpe: and so your way lies before you: wée must folde our flocks, and you may be gone when you please. In faith, quoth he, Oenone chose Paris for her Phere in her labours, and her fellow in her loues: thinking the swéetest face the best fairing for a gentlewomans eye: But you contrary haue got a smoakie Vulcan, as Venus, to set out your excellencie: for as a Christal placed by Ieate, séems the more pure: so a beauteous Paragon shewes the more faire, ioyned with a deformed peasant. Mullidor hearing the Gentleman thus abuse his patience, as a man conceited in his owne propernesse, and especially afore Mirimida, thwarted him thus. You master meacock, that stand vpon the beauty of your churnmilke face: as brag with your Buzzard on your fist, as a Sow vnder an Apple tree, know that we country swaines, as we are not beholding to Nature for beauty, so wee little account of fortune for any fauor: Tush man, my crookeback harboreth more honest condition, then thy fléering countenance: and these course suites can fetch more pence then thy silkes: for I beléeue thou makest a sconce of the Mercers booke: thou hast made such sure entrance there, that thou wilt neuer from thence till thou béest torne out by the eares. Goodman Courtier, wée haue queasie stomackes that will hardly brooke them: and therfore fine foole, be gone with your foole, or I will so belabour you, as you shall feele my fingers this fortnight: and with that, Mullidor heaued vp his shéepehooke, and bent his browes, so that the gentleman giuing to Mirimida the adue, hee put spurs to his horse, and went away.

At this manly part of Mullidor, Mirimida laught hartily, and

he

he tooke a great conceit that hee had ſhewed himſelfe ſuch a tall man. Vpon this, Mirimida gaue him a noſegay which ſtucke in her boſome for a fauour, which he accepted ſo gratefully, as if another had giuen him a tunne of gold. Night drew on, and they folded their ſhéep and departed, ſhee to her father, and he to olde Calena, as ioyfull a man as Paris, when hee had the promiſe from Venus: hee plodded on his way with his head full of paſſions, and his heart full of new thoughts, and ſtil his eye was vpon the noſegay, inſomuch that he ſtood in a doubt whether it were Loue, or ſome other fury then Loue, that thus pincht him and pincht him: at laſt hee fell with himſelfe into this kinde of meditation. Now doe I perceiue that loue is a purgation, and ſearches euery veine, that though it enter in at the eie, yet it rūs to the heart, and then it keepes an olde coile, where it worketh like a Iugglers boye. O loue, thou art like to a flea, which biteth ſore, and yet leapeſt away and art not to be found, or to a pot of ſtrong ale, that maketh a man call his father whoreſon: ſo both of them bewitch a mans wits that he knoweth not a B. from a battledore. Infortunate Mullidor, and therfore infortunate, becauſe thou art ouer the eares in loue, and with whom? with Mirimida, whoſe eyes are like to ſparks of fire, and thine like a pound of butter, like to be melted with her beauty, & to conſume with the frying flame of fancy. Ah Mullidor, her face is like to a redde and white Daiſie growing in a grēne meadow, and thou like a Bee, that commeſt and ſuckeſt hony from it, & carrieſt it home to the hiue with a heaue and hoe, that is as much to ſay, as with a headful of woes, and a heart full of ſorrows and maladies. Be of good chēre, Mirimida laughs on thē, and thou knoweſt, a womans ſmile is as good to a louer, as a ſun-ſhine day to a hay-maker, ſhe ſhewes thē kind lookes, and caſts many a ſhēpes-eye at thē, which ſignifies that ſhe counts the man worthy to iumpe a march with her: nay more, Mullidor, ſhe hath giuen thē a noſegay of flowers, wherein as a top-gallant for all the reſt, is ſet in Roſemary for remembrance: Ah Mullidor, cheere thy ſelfe, feare not, loue and fortune fauors luſty lads, cowards are not friends to affection, therefore venture, for thou haſt won her, els had ſhe not giuen thee this noſegay: and with this remembring himſelf, he ſtart vp, left off his amorous paſſions, & trudged home to his

house, where entring in, olde Calena stumbles to see in what humour her sonne came home: frolick he was and his cap on the one side, he ask if supper were ready: his mother seeing his stomacke was good, thought there was some hope of her sons good fortune, and therfore said, there was a pudding in the pot that is almost enough, but some quoth she, what newes? what successe in thy loues? how doth Mirimida like thee? Ah mother, qd. Mullidor, and he smiled, how should I bee vsed, but as one that was wrapped in his mothers smocke when he was borne? Can the Sun want heat, and the winter cold, or a proper man bee denied his sutes? No mother, assoone as I beganne to circumglaze her with my Sophistry, and to fetch her about with two or three bents from mine eyes, I gaue her such a thump on the brest, that she would scarce say no: I told her my mind, and wrapt her in the prodigality of my wit, that she said another time should: but then we parted laughing, with such a sweet smile, that made me lose in the hast like a budgin dagget: she gaue me this nosegay for a fauour, which how I esteeme it, gesse you: thus haue I vsed her in kindnesse, and she vsed me in curtesie: and so I hope wee shall make a friendly conclusion. By my troth, quoth she, and I hope no lesse, for I tel you, when maides giue gifts, they meane wel, and a woman if she laugh with a glauncing look, wisheth it were neither to do nor vndone: she is thine, my sonne, feare not: and with that she laid the cloth, & set victuals on the bord, where Mullidor tried himselfe so tall a trencher-man, that his Mother perceiued by his drift he would not die for loue. Leuing this passionate lubber to the conceit of his loues, let vs returne to the yong courtier called Radagon, who trotting a soft pace vpon his courser, seeing the Sunne now bright, and then ouer-shadowed with cloudes, began to compare the state of the weather fantastically to the humour of his Mirimidaes fancies, saying. When Phœbus was eclipst with a vapour, then she lowred, when hee shewed his glory in his brightnes, then she smiled. Thus he dallied in an vncoth motion so long, that at last hee began to feele a fire that fretted to the heart. Riding thus in a quandary, he entred into the consideration of Mirimidaes beauty, whereupon frolickly in an extemporate humor, he made this Sonnet.

Radagons

Radagons Sonnet.

No cleere appear'd vpon the azurd skye,
A vayle of stormes had shaddowed *Phœbus* face,
And in a sable mantle of disgrace
Sate he that y'cleeped heauens bright eye,
As though that he,
Perplext for *Clitia*, meant to leaue his place,
And wrapt in sorrowes did resolue to die:
For death to louers is euer nye:
Thus folded in a hard and mournefull blaze,
Distrest sate hee.
A misty fogge had thickned all the ayre,
Iris sate solemne and denied her showres:
Flora in tawny hid vp all her flowers,
And would not diaper her meades with faire,
As though that she
Were armd vpon the barren earth to lowre.
Vnto the founts *Diana* nild repaire,
But sate as ouershadowed with despaire,
Solemne and sad within a withered bowre,
Her Nymphs and she.
Mars malecontent lay sicke on *Venus* knee,
Venus in dumps sate muffled with a frowne,
Iuno laid all her frolicke humors downe,
And *Ione* was all in dumpes as well as she.
Twas Fates decree.
For *Neptune* (as he meant the world to drowne,)
Heau'd vp his surges to the highest tree,
And leagu'd with *Eol*, mard the Seamans glee,
Beating the Cedar, with his billowes downe.
Thus wroth was he.
My mistris deignes to shew her sun-bright face,
The ayre cleerd vp, the cloudes did fade away,
Phœbus was frolicke when we did display
The gorgeous beauties that her front doe grace:
So that when she
But walkt abroad, the stormes then fled away,
Flora did checker all her trading place,

And

And *Neptune* calmde the surges with his mace,
Diana and her Nymphs were blith and gay,
When her they see.
Venus and *Mars* greed in a smile:
And iealous *Iune* ceasd now to lowre,
Ioue saw her face, and sighed in his bowre,
Iris and *Eol* laught within a while
To see this glee:
Ah borne was she within a happy houre
That makes heauen, earth, and Gods and all to smile?
Such wonders can her beauteous works compile,
To cleere the world from any froward lowre,
Ah blest be shee.

When Radagon had framde his fancie, he began with sundry insuing thoughts to consider, that she was beautiful & of a base country breed, where vertue alsoone dwelleth as in high dignities: that her wit was sharpe, and Nature had done her part to make her euery way excellent, as well in exterior perfection, as in inward qualities: though her fortunes were low, yet her desires were modest: and proud she could not be, as being poore: to be pœuish were booteleſſe, in that her hope did not aspire, her lookes bewraid she was no wanton: & her blushing, that she was bashfull: euery way she seemed vertuous, as she was beautifull.

The consideration of her excellency so pierced the hart of Radagon, that from liking he fell to loue, from small prayses vnto great passions. Muth, quoth he, though wedlocke bee a thing so doubtful & dangerous to deale withall, as to seeke roses amongst thornes, Eeles amongst Scorpions, & one pure potion amongst a thousand boxes of confection; yet nature doth establish it as necessary, Law as honest, and reason as profitable. Some Cynicks (as Diogenes) wil thwart it with a dilemma, & say, that for yong men tis too soone, for old men too late to marry, concluding so enigmatically, it were not good to marry, at all: other wil say, as Arminius a ruler of Carthage said, who being importunately perswaded to marry, answered, No, said he, I dare not: for if I chance vpō one that is wise, she wil be wilful, if wealthy, thē wāton, if poore then pœuish, if beautiful, then proud, if deformed, thē loathsome: and the least of these is able to kil a thousand men. In deede

deede I cannot deny but oft *sub melle latet venenum*, that vertue is like a boxe of Iuory containing some baleful Aconiton, or to a faire shoe that wrings the foot: such loue as is laid vpon such a foundation, is a short pleasure ful of paine, & an affection bought with a thousand miseries, but a woman that is faire & vertuous, maketh her husband a ioyfull man, and whether hee be rich, or poore, yet alwaies he may haue a ioyful heart. A woman that is of a silent tongue, shamefast in countenance, sober in behauiour, and honest in condition, adorned with vertuous qualities correspondent, is like a goodly pleasant flower, deckt with the colours of al the flowers of the garden: and such a one (quoth he) is Mirimida, and therefore, though she be poore, I wil loue her, and like her: and if shee will fancy me, I wil make her my wife. And vpon this he resolued to prosecute his suite towards her, insomuch that as soone as he came home and had rested himselfe a while, he kept to his standish, and wrote her a letter.

Radagon was not more pained with this passionate maladie, then poore Eurymachus, who could take no rest, although euery day in her presence hee fed his eie with the beautie of her face: but as the Hidaspis, the more he drinks, the more thirsty he is, so Eurymachus, the more he looked, the more hee loued, as hauing his eye deepely enamoured of the object: reueale any more his suite he durst not, because when he began to chat of loue, she shakt him off, & either flung away in a rage, or else forst him to fall to other prattle, insomuch that he determined to discourse his mind in a letter which he performed as cunningly as he could, & sent it her. Mullidor that alse rapt out his reasons diuers times to Mirimida, vntil she was weary of the groomes importunate follies, and so with a sharpe word or two nipt him on the pate: whereupon asking his mothers counsaile, she perswaded him to write vnto Mirimida, although he and a pen, were as fit as an asse and a harp: yet he bought him paper, and stealing into the Churchyard vnder an Apple tree, there in his Muses framed a letter and sent her. Thus had fortune (meaning to be merrie) appointed in her secret synode, that all these three should vse one meanes to passe their loues, & brought it so to passe, that the three letters from these three rivals were deliuered at one instant: which when Mirimida saw, she sat her downe and laught,

wondring at the rarenes of this chance, that should in a moment bring such a conceit to passe: at last (for as then she was leading forth her sheepe) she sate her downe, and looking on the superscription, said to her selfe: What Adamants are faire faces, that can draw both rich, poore, and fooles to lodge in the labyrinth of their beauties? At this she sighed, and the first letter she broke open, because he was her first Louer, was Eurymachus. The contents whereof are these.

Eurymachus the Shepheard, to *Mirimida* the Goddesse of Thessaly.

WHen (Mirimida) I sit by thy sweet selfe, & wonder at thy present sight, fading as the Rose upon the wealth of thy beauties, the conceit of thine excellency driues me into an extasie, that I become dumbe with ouer much delight: for Nature sets downe this as an authenticke principle:

Sensibile sensui supposítum nulla fit sensatio.

If the flower be put in the nostrill, there is no smel: the colour clapt close to the eye, blemisheth the sight: so a Louer in presence of his Mistris, hath the organs of his speech tied, that hee conceales with silence, and sighes out his smothered passions with sorrowes.

Ah Mirimida, cõsider that loue is such a fire, as either will burst forth, or burne the house: it is such a streame, as will either haue his course, or breake through the banks & make a deluge, or else force their heartstrings crack with secrecie. Then Mirimida, if I be lauish in my pen, blame mee not that am so laden with loue: if I be bold, attribute it to thy beauty, not my impudency: and thinke what I ouer-dare in, it growes through the extremity of loyal affection, which is so deepely imprinted in my thoughts, as neither time can diminish, nor misfortune blemish. I aime not, Mirmida, at thy wealth, but at thy vertues: for the more I consider thy perfection, the more I grow passionate, and in such an humor, as if thou deny, there is no meanes to cure my malady, but the salue which healeth al incureable sores, & that is death. Therfore sweet (Mirimida) consider of my loues, & vse me as my loyalty deserues: let not my pouerty put in any barre, nor the baseness of my birth be any excuse of thy affection: weigh my desires, not my degrees, & either send me a speedy plaister to salue

my

my despairing passions, or a corrasive to cut off my lingring sorrowes; either thy favours with life, or thy denial with death, betweene which I rest in hope till I heare thine answere.

Thine who can be no others but thine,

the Shepheard *Eurymachus*.

To the end of this letter (for that he would run descant upon his wit) he set downe a Sonnet written in the forme of a Madrigall, thus:

Eurymachus in laudem Mirimidie,

his Motto.

Inuita fortuna dedi vota concordia.

WHen *Flora* proud in pompe of all her flowers,
Sate bright and gay,
And gloried in the dew of *Iris* showers,
And did display
Her mantle, checquered all with gawdy greene:
Then I
alone
A mournefull man in *Ericine* was seene:
With folded armes I trampled through the grasse,
Tracing as he
That held the throne of Fortunes brittle glasse,
And loue, to be
Like Fortune, fleeting as the restles wind,
Mixed
With mists,
Whose dampe doth make the clearest eye grow blinde:
Thus in a maze I spied a hideous flame.
I cast my sight
And saw where blithely bathing in the same
With great delight,
A worme did lie, wrapt in a smoakie sweate;
And yet
twas strange.
It careless lay and shrunke not at the heat.
I stood amaz'd, and wondring at the sight,
While that a dame
That shone like to the heauens rich sparkling light,

Discourst the same,
And said, my friend, this worme within the fire
Which lies
content,
Is *Venus* worme, and represents desire.
A Salamander is this princely beast,
Deckt with a Crowne
Giuen him by *Cupid* as a gorgeous crest
'Gainst Fortunes frowne:
Content he lies and bathes him in the flame,
And goes
not forth,
For why, he cannot liue without the same.
As he, so Louers liue within the fire
Of feruent loue,
And shrinke not from the flame of hot desire,
Nor will not moue,
From any heate that *Venus* force imparts:
But be
content
Within a fire, and waste away their harts.
Vp flew the dame and vanisht in a cloud;
But there stood I,
And many thoughts within my mind did shroud
My loue: for why
I felt within my heart a scorching fire,
And yet
As did
The Salamander, 'twas my whole desire.

Mirimida hauing read this sonnet, she straight (being of a pregnant wit) conceited the drift of this Madrigall, smiled and laid it by: and then next tooke vp Radagons letter, which was written to this effect.

Radagon of *Thessalie*, to the faire Shepheard-
desse *Mirimida* health.

I Cannot tell (faire Mistris) whether I should praise Fortune as a friend, or curse her as a foe, hauing at vnawares presented me

me with the view of your perfection, which sight may be either the summe of my blisse, or the beginning of my bale: for in you rests the ballance either to weigh me downe my due with curtesie, or my deniall with extreme unkindnesse. Such as are prickt with the bones of the Dolphin, heare musicke, & they are presently healed of their malady: they which are envenomed with the Viper, rub the sore with Rubarb, and feele a remedy; & those which drinke Aconiton, are cured by Antidotes. But loue is like the sting of a Scorpion, it must be healed by affection: for neither charme, herb, stone, nor mineral hath ver tue to cure it: which made Apollo exclaime this passion.

Hei mihi quod nullis amor est medicabilis herbis.

With the same distresse (sweet Mirimida) am I pained, who lighting by chance as Paris did in the vale of Ida upon Venus, but I feare me lesse curteous then Venus. I haue no golden apple (faire Nimph) to present thee with, so to prooue thee supreme of beauty: but the deuotion of my thoughts is offered humbly at thy feete, which shall euer confesse none so beauteous as Mirimida. Then as Venus for reward gaue Paris Helena, so curteous Nimph, be prodigal of thy fauors, and giue me thy heart, which shall be to me more deare then a hundred Helens.

But here perhaps thou wilt obiect, that mens pleas are like Painters Pensels which draw no substance but shadowes, that to the worst proportions giue the richest colours, & to the coursest pictures the finest glasses; that what we write is of course, and when we find passions, then are we least passionate, hauing sorrowfull pens when we haue lecure hearts, & lowring lookes when we haue laughing thoughts. I cannot deny (sweete Mistris) but that hot loues are like a bauills blaze, & that men can promise more in a moment, then they will performe in a month. I know there was a Demophoon that deceiued Phillis, an Aeneas that falsified his faith to Dido, a Theseus that forsooke his Ariadne: yet measure not al by some mens minds: for a few particular instances conclude not generall axiomes: though some haue bin fleeting, thinke not al to be false: try me, I referre your passions to my proofe, & as you finde me loyall, so reward me with loue. I craue no authentical graunt, but a superficial fauor,

say (Mirimida) that Radagon shal be welcome if he be faithful, & then my hope shall comfort my heart. In which suspence I rest confused at the barre of your curtesie. Farewell.

Mirimidaes Radagon, though she will not
be *Radagons Mirimida*.

This she read ouer twise and blusht at it, as feeling a little heat, but straight she sighed, & shakt it from her heart, and had laid it by, but that turning ouer the next page, she espied certaine verses, which was a Canzon pend thus:

Radagon in *Dianam.*
Non inga Taurus amat: qua tamen odit habet.

It was a valley gawdy greene,
Where *Dian* at the fount was seene:
Greene it was,
And did passe
All other of *Dianaes* Bowers,
In the pride of *Floraes* flowers.
A fount it was that no Sunne sees,
Circled in with *Cypres* trees,
Set so nie,
As *Phœbus* eye
Could not doe the Virgins scathe,
To see them naked when they bathe.
She sate there all in white,
Colour fitting her delight.
Virgins so
Ought to goe:
For white in Armorie is plac't,
To be the colour that is chast.
Her taffata Cassocke might you see,
Tucked vp aboue her knee,
Which all did show
There below
Legs as white as Whales bone,
So white and chast was neuer none.

Hard

Hard by her vpon the ground,
Sate her Virgins in a round,
Bathing their
Golden haire,
And ſinging all in notes hie,
Fie on *Venus* flattering eie.
Fie on Loue, it is a toy,
Cupid witleſſe, and a boy.
All her fires
And deſires
Are plagues that God ſent from on hie,
To peſter men with miſerie.
As thus the Virgins did diſdaine,
Louers ioy, and Louers paine;
Cupid nie
Did eſpie
Grieuing at *Dianaes* ſong,
Slily ſtole theſe maids among.
His bow of ſteele, darts of fire,
He ſhot amongſt them ſweet deſire,
VVhich ſtraight flies
In their eies,
And at the entrance made them ſtart,
For it ran from eye to heart.
Caliſto ſtraight ſuppoſed *Ioue*,
VVas faire and frolicke for to loue,
Dian ſhe
Scap't not free,
For well I wot hereupon
She lou'd the ſwaine *Endymion*.
Clitia, *Phœbus*, and *Cloris* eye,
Thought none ſo faire as *Mercuries*:
Venus thus
Did diſcuſſe,
By her ſonne in darts of fire,
None ſo chaſt to checke deſire.
Dian roſe with all her maides,
Bluſhing thus at Louers braids,

With sighes all
Shew their thrall,
And flinging hence pronounce this Saw,
What so strong as Loues sweet law?

Mirimida hauing read the Letter of Radagon, perceiued that loue was in his eyes, and perhaps had stily toucht his hart: but she that was chary of her choice, and resolute not to fetter her selfe with fancy, did passe ouer these passions, as men doe the shadowes of a Painters pensell, which while they view, they praise, & when they haue praised, passe ouer without any more remembrance: yet shee could not but enter into the humorous reach of his conceit, how hee checkt the coy disdaine of women in his Sonet: she blusht, and her thoughts went away with her bloud, and so she lighted on the letter that Mullidor had sent her, which droue her into a pleasant vaine. The effects of his passions were these.

Mullidor the male-content, with his pen clapt full of loue, to his Mistris *Mirimida* greeting.

AFter my hearty commendations remembred, hoping you be in as good health, as I was at the making hereof. This is to certifie you, that loue may well be compared to a bottle of hay, which once set on fire, will neuer be quenched: or to a cup ful of strong ale, which when a man hath once tasted, hee neuer leaues till hee hath drunke it all vp: so Mistris Mirimida, after the furious flames of your eyes had set my poore heart vpon the coales of loue, I was so scorched on the gridiron of affection, that I had no rest til I was almost turned to a coale, and after I had tasted of the liquor of your sweet phisnomy, I neuer left supping of your amiable countenance, till with loue I was almost ready to burst. Consider with your self, faire Shepheardesse, that poore men feele paine a swell as Princes: that Mullidor is sicke of such a malady, as by no meanes may bee cured, vnlesse your selfe lay a sear-cloth to draw away my sorrowes: then be pittifull to me, lest you be counted disdaineful, to put so trusty a louer

out

out of his right wits: for there's no hoe, but either I muſt haue you, or elſe for very plaine loue run mad. It may be (Mirimida) you thinke me too baſe for your beauty: why, when you haue married me, I am content to ſerue you as a man, and to doe all thoſe indeuours that belong to a ſeruant, and rather to hold you for my Miſtris, then my wife: then ſeeing you ſhal haue the ſoueraignty at my hands, which is a thing that al women deſire, loue me, ſweet Mirimida, & think this, if you match with me, old Calena my mother hath that in a clout, that wil do vs both good. Thus hoping you will ponder my paſſions in your mind, & be more courteous then to caſt away a yong mã for loue. Farewel.

Yours halfe mad, becauſe he would be yours, *Mullidor* the malcontent.

Such a poeticall fury tooke Mullidor in the braines, that hee thought to ſhew his vaine in verſe, and therefore annexed to his letter this pleaſant Ditty.

Mullidors Madrigall.

Dildido, dildido,
Oh loue, oh loue,
I feele thy rage rumble below and aboue.

In ſommer time I ſaw a face,
Trop belle pour moy helas helas;
Like to a ſton'd horſe was her pace:
Was euer young man ſo diſmaid?
Her eyes like waxe torches did make me afraid,
Trop belle pour moy, voila man treſpas.

Thy beautie (my loue) exceedeth ſuppoſes,
Thy haire is a nettle for the niceſt roſes,
Mon dieu aide moy
That I with the Primroſe of my freſh wit,
May tumble her tyranny vnder my feete,
He donque ie ſera vn ieune roy.
Trop belle pour moy helas helas,
Trop belle pour moy, voila man treſpas.

Mirimida hauing read this humorous fancy of Mullidor, began thus to meditat with her self. Listen not, fond wench, vnto loue, for if thou dost, thou learnest to loose, thou shalt find griefe to be thy gaines, and folly the pay-mistris that rewards al amorous trauels. If thou wed thy selfe to Radagon, thou aimest beyond thy reach: and loking higher then thy fortunes, thou wilt repent thy desires: for Mirimida, affects beyond cõpasse haue ofttimes il effects, rich robes haue not euer swæt consent, & therefore the meane is the merriest honour. What then, must Eurymachus of all these three be the man that must make vp the match? he is a shepheard and harbors quiet in his cottage, his wishes are not aboue his wealth, nor doth his conceit climbe higher then his deserts. He hath sufficient to shrowd thée from want, & to maintaine the state of an honest life. Shepheards wrong not their wiues with suspition, nor do Country Swaines esteem lesse of their loues then higher degrées. But Mirimida, mean men haue frownes as well as Kings: the least haire hath his shadow, the Fly her splæne, the Ant her gal, and the poorest Peasant his choler. Peasants can wæld a cudgel better then a great Lord, and dissention wil haue a fling amongst the meanest. If therfore mariage must haue her inconuenièce, better goldẽ gyues then iron fetters. What saiest thou then to Mullidor? that he is Mullidor, and let that suffice to shake him off as a fole: for it were thy discredit to haue only a Woorock to kéep the Wolfe frõ the doze. Why then meanest thou not to loue? No, fond lasse, if thou bée wise: for what is sweeter then libertie? And what burthen heauier then the fist of a froward husband? Amongst many Scorpions thou lookest for one Eele: amongst a hedge ful of nettles for one flower: amongst a thousand flatterers for one that is faithful: and yet when thou hast him, thy thoughts are at his wil, and thy actions are limited to his humors. Beware Mirimida, strike not at a stale, because it is painted, though honey be swæt, Bées haue stings: there is no swæter life then is chastity; for in that estate thou shalt liue commended and vncontrolde.

Upon this she put vp the letters, and because she would not leade her Louers into a Labyrinth of hope, she appointed them al to mæt her at the sheepfolds on one day & at one houre, where the Wooers that stood vpon thornes to heare their censure, met

without

without faile: After salutes past betweene Mirimida and them, she began to parly with them thus.

Gentlemen, al riuals in loue, & aimers at one fortune, though you three affect like desire to haue Mirimidaes fauor, yet but one of you can weare the flower, & perhaps none: for it is as my fancy censures: therfore, are you content that I shal set down which of you, or whether none of you shall enioy the end of your suites; & whose is forsaken, to part hence with patience, & neuer more to talke of his passions? To this they all agreed, & she made this answer. Why then, Radagon and Eurymachus, weare you the willow Garland, not that I hold either your degrees or deserts worthlesse of a fairer then Mirimida: but that the destinies do so appoint to my desires, that your affects cannot worke in me any effects. At this Radagon and Eurymachus frowned, not so much that they were forsaken, but that so beautiful a Creature would wed her selfe to such a deformed asse as Mullidor: and the foole, he simpered it, in hope to haue the wench. Now (quoth she) Mullidor may hope to be the man: but trust me, as I found him, I leaue him, a dolt in his loue, and a foole in his fortunes. At this they laught, and he hung the head, and she left them all.

Radagon taking his Hawk to flie at the partridge: Eurymachus marching with his shephooke to the folds: Mullidor hying home to his mother to recount his mishaps, & Mirimida singing that there was no Goddesse to Diana, no life to liberty, nor no loue to chastity.

Francesco, Isabel, and all the rest of the guests applauded this discourse of the pleasant host, and for that it was late in the night, they al rose, and taking their leaue of Francesco, departed, he and his wife, bidding their Host good night, and so going to bed, where we leaue them to leade the rest of their liues in quiet.

Thus (quoth the Palmer) you haue heard the discouery of youths follies, and a true discourse of a Gentlemans fortunes. But now courteous Palmer, (quoth the Gentleman) it rests that we craue, by your owne promise, the reason of your pilgrimage to Venice. That (quoth the Palmer) is discourst in a word: for know sir, that inioyning my selfe to penance for the follies of my youths passions, hauing liued in loue, and therfore reapt all my losse by loue: hearing that of all the Cities in Europe, Venice

hath most semblance of Venus vanities, I goe thither, not onely to see fashions, but to quip at follies, that I may draw others from that harme that hath brought me to this hazard.

The gentlewomen of Venice your neighbors, but unknowne to me, haue more fauours in their faces, then vertue in their thoughts: their beauties are more curious then their qualities be precious, caring more to be figured out with Helen, then to be famoused with Lucrece: they striue to make their faces gorgeous, but neuer seeke to fitte their minds to their God, and couet to haue more knowledge in loue then in religion: their eyes bewray their wantonnesse, not their modesty: and their lookes are lures that reclaime not Hawkes, but make them only baite at dead stales. As the Gentlewomen, so are the men, loose liuers, straight louers, such as hold their cōsciences in their purses, and their thoughts in their eies, counting that houre ill spent that in fancy is not misspent. Because therfore this great City of Venice is holden Loues Paradice, thither do I direct my Pilgrimage, that seeing their passions, I may, being a Palmer, win them to penance, by shewing the miseries that Venus mireth with their momentary contents: if not, yet I shall carry home to my Countrimen, salues to cure their sores: I shall see much, heare little, & by the insight into other mens extremes, returne more wary, meaning then to visite you, and make you pitie to all.

The heedful Host hauing iudicially vnderstood the pittiful report of the Palmer, giuing truce to his passions, with the teares he spent, and resolued to requite that thankfully which he had attended heedfully, gaue this Catastrophe to his sad and sorrowfull discourse, Palmer, thou hast with the Ritrell foreshewed the storme ere it comes, painting out the shapes of loue, as lively as the grapes in Zeuxis tables were pourtrayed cunningly: thou hast lent youth Eagles eyes to behold the Sun: Achilles sword to cut and recure, leauing those medicines to saue others, that hath lost thy selfe, and hauing burnt thy wings with the flie, by dallying too long with the fire: thou hast bequeathed others a lesson with the Unicorne, to preuent poyson by preserues, before they tast with the lip. The onely request I make in requitall of my attention, is, that thou leaue certaine testimonies on these walls, whereon whensoeuer I looke, I shall remember

Francesces

Francescoes follies, and thy foresight.

The Palmer esteeming the courteous reply of his Host, and desirous to satisfie his request, drawing blood from the baine Cephalia, (on an arch of white Iuory, erected at the end of an Arbor adorned with Honysuckles and Roses) he wrot thus with a pensell.

In greener yeeres, when as my greedy thoughts
Can yeeld their homage to ambitious will,
My feeble wit that then preuailed noughts,
Perforce presented homage to his ill.
And I in follies bondes fulfild with crime,
At last vnloosde, thus spide my losse of time.

As in his circular and ceaselesse ioy,
The yeere begins, and in it selfe returnes,
Refresht by presence of the eye of day,
That sometimes nie, and sometimes far solourns,
So loue in me (conspiring my decay)
With endlesse fire my heedlesse bosome burnes:
And from the end of my aspiring sinne;
My paths of error hourely doth begin.

Aries.

When in the Ram the Sun renewes his beames,
Beholding mournfull earth arraid in griefe,
That waites reliefe from his refreshing gleames;
The tender flocks reioycing their reliefe,
Doe leape for ioy, and lap the siluer streames.
So at my prime when youth in me was chiefe,
All Heifer-like with wanton horne I playd,
And by my will, my wit to loue betrayde.

Taurus.

When *Phœbus* with *Europus* bearer bides,
The Spring appeares, impatient of delaies,
The labourer to the fields his plow-swaines guides,
He sowes, he plants, he builds at all assaies
When prime of yeeres that many errors hides,
By fancies force did trace vngodly waies,
I blindfold walkt, disdaining to behold,
That life doth vade, and young men must be old.

Gemini.

When in the hold whereas the twinnes doe reſt,
Proud *Phlegon* breathing fire doth laſt amaine,
The trees with leaues, the earth with flowers is dreſt:
When I in pride of yeeres and peeuiſh braine
Preſum'd too farre, and made fond loue my gueſt,
With froſts of care my flowers were nipt amaine.
In height of weale who beares a careleſſe hart,
Repents too late his ouer-fooliſh part.

Cancer.

When in Æſtiuall *Cancers* gloomy bower
The greater glory of the heauens doth ſhine,
The ayre is calme, the birds at euery ſtower,
To tempt the heauens with harmony diuine.
When I was firſt inthrald to *Cupids* power,
In vaine I ſpent the May month of my time,
Singing for ioy to ſee me captiue thrall
To him, whoſe gaines are griefe, whoſe comfort ſmall.

Leo.

When in the height of his Meridian walke,
The Lions hold containes the eye of day,
The ryping corne growes yellow in the ſtalke,
When ſtrength of yeeres did bleſſe me euery way,
Maskt with delights offolly was my talke,
Youth ripened all my thoughts to my decay:
In luſt I ſowed, my fruite was loſſe of time,
My hopes are proud, and yet my body ſlime.

Virgo.

When in the Virgins lap earths comfort ſleepes,
Bating the furie of his burning eyes,
Both corne and fruits are firmd, and comfort creepes
On euery plant and flowre that ſpringing riſe.
When age at laſt his chiefe dominion keepes,
And leades me on to ſee my vanities,
What loue and ſcant foreſight did make me ſow
In youthfull yeeres, is ripened now in woe.

Libra.

Libra.

When in the ballance *Daphnes* Lemman shines,
The Plough-man gathereth fruit for passed paine,
When I at last considered of my sinnes,
And thought vpon my youth and follies vaine,
I cast my count, and reason now begins
To guide mine eies with iudgement, bought with paine:
Which weeping wish a better way to finde,
Or else for euer to the world be blinde.

Scorpio.

VVhen with the Scorpion proude *Apollo* plaies,
The wines are trod, and carried to their presse,
The woods are feld 'gainst winters sharpe affaires.
When grauer yeeres my iudgement did addresse,
I 'gan repaire my ruines and decaies,
Exchanging will to wit and soothfastnesse:
Claiming from Time and Age no good but this,
To see my sinne, and sorrow for my misse.

Sagittarius.

When as the Archer in his winter hold,
The *Delian* Harper tunes his wonted loue,
The ploughman sowes and tilles his laboured mold:
When with aduice and iudgement I approue,
How loue in youth hath griefe for gladnesse sold,
The seedes of shame I from my heart remoue,
And in their steads I set downe plants of grace,
And with repent bewaile my youthfull race.

Capricornus.

When he that in *Eurotas* siluer glide
Doth baine his tresse, beholdeth *Capricorne*,
The day growes short: then hastes the winters tide,
The Sun with sparing lights doth seeme to mourne
Gray in the greene, the flowers their beauty hide:
When as I see that I to death was borne,
My strength decaid, my graue already dresst,
I count my life my losse, my death my best.

Aquarius

Aquarius.

When with *Aquarius* *Phœbus* brother staies,
And frost and snowes the pride of earth betrikes:
When age my head with hoarie haires doth fill,
Reason sits downe, and bids me count my daies,
And pray for peace, and blame my froward will,
In depth of griefe in this distresse I crie
Peccaui, Domine miserere mei.

Pisces.

When in the Fishes mansion *Phœbus* dwels,
The dairs renew, the earth regaines his rest:
When old as yeares my want my death foretels
My thoughts and praiers to heaven are whole addrest.
Repentance, youth by folly quite expels,
I long to be dissolued for my best:
That young in zeale, long beaten with my rod,
I may grow old to wisedome, and to God.

The Palmer had no sooner finished his circle, but the Host ouer-read his conceit, and wondring at the excellency of his wit, from his experience began to sucke much wisedome, and being very loth to detaine his guest too long: after they had broken their fast, and the good man of the house courteously had giuen him thankes for his fauour, the Palmer set forward towards Venice: what there he did, or how he liued, when I am aduertised (good Gentlemen) I will send you tidings. Meane while, let euery one learne (by Frances foes fall) to beware, lest at last (too late) they be inforced to bewaile.

FINIS.